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Chastellux

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AN  
E S S A Y  
ON  
PUBLIC HAPPINESS.

VOLUME THE FIRST.



1881. 11/11/11

AN  
E S S A Y  
ON  
PUBLIC HAPPINESS,  
INVESTIGATING  
THE STATE OF HUMAN NATURE,  
UNDER EACH OF  
ITS PARTICULAR APPEARANCES,  
THROUGH THE  
SEVERAL PERIODS OF HISTORY,  
TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

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Nil desperandum.

HOR.

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VOLUME THE FIRST.

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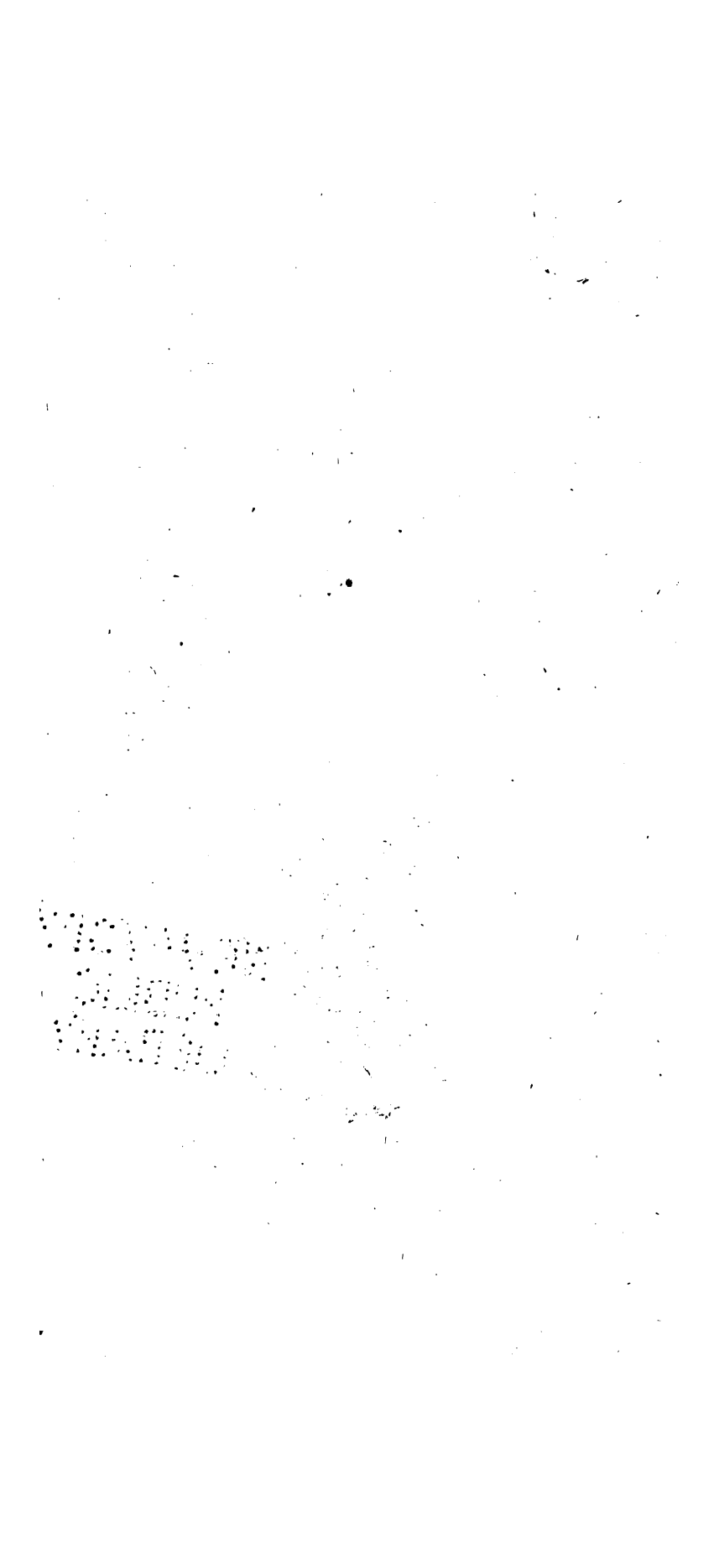
*with the French of the Marquis de Chastell*



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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**A**N easily discernible inferiority will enable the learned reader to distinguish the notes of the Translator, from those of his ingenious Author. For this reason, it might, perhaps, seem unnecessary to affix any particular mark to the first; but as it may happen that by blending all the Notes indiscriminately together, a less attentive observer might imagine that those of the original Composer had been written by the Translator, a K is placed at the conclusion of the additional notes. Where remarks may prove either false or frivolous, it must be a contemptible act of meanness which could endeavour to have them ascribed to an author incapable of producing such. To every reader, whose knowledge of historical and literary subjects is preserved by a tenacious memory, this humble addition of remarks must prove absolutely needless; but memory is not the perpetual attend-

#### A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

dant upon learning, and the scholar, who enjoys an imagination too lively to retain a regular detail of facts, will forgive the intrusion of matters which he may, possibly, have forgotten. To the reader, who is less conversant in these subjects, it is presumed that no apology can be necessary. Sensible of the great difficulty of infusing into versions the spirit of the originals, it is not easy to describe the diffidence and apprehensions with which the Translator commits his labour to the press. Even now, whilst he is writing, the vanity of a second-hand author entirely forsakes him, and he trembles lest he should be taxed, not only with having enervated the force of expressions, by running beyond the limits of a merely literal construction, but thrown them into interpretations absurdly distant from their real meaning. The nice discernment of every fault is solely peculiar to the few, who are capable of writing with elegance and perspicuity. As their candour hath  
generally

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

generally risen in proportion to their knowledge of the hardness of such a task, he would willingly flatter himself that he might cast this first attempt before them, after having premised, that if he had been much dissatisfied with it in the closet, he should never have permitted its appearance in public. If he hath done wrong, it is the result of ignorance alone. It is not in his nature to treat with disrespect, that class of readers, for whom this work is calculated.

## DEDICATION.

English dress, a composition which you understand so perfectly, in the French dress.

The peculiar disposition which humbly avoids the praise, it constantly attempts to merit, shall secure you even against the violence of a modern dedication. I have been too intimate with you to be ignorant that panegyric is as painful to you, as the bitterness of invective to another. But yet you must not be so unconscionable as to suppose, that because your memory is too treacherous to remind you of the favours which you have conferred, they can possibly have escaped mine. Through the engaging commerce of an honest friendship, you have unmercifully incumbered me with an enormous debt. I have no method of confessing it, but this; and thus, instead of being payed, you must become a more capital creditor than ever. A larger sum of gratitude is owing, in recompence for the privilege of subscribing myself,

With inviolable esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your sincere, and affectionate friend,

THE TRANSLATOR.

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THE

INTRODUCTION.

**A**FTER the lapse of so many enlightened ages, in which the most ingenious and laborious researches of successive writers appear, even in trifles, to have tried, examined, and compleated every subject, I must presume to fix the attention of mankind upon new objects. If it be demanded what these objects are, the answer is, that they are become the most essential to our happiness; they lead to enquiries into a topic, an obligation, to discuss which, is alarming; they point to the solution of a question,

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where doubt alone might prove disgraceful to humanity. Shall men be always the enemies of men? shall beings of the best organization, at no period, acquire the advantages which the vilest of the brutes possess; the advantages of living peaceably with each other? is not society, at least, susceptible of amendment, if not of perfection?

In whatsoever manner this important problem may be resolved, an ample field will lie open to reflection: the investigation of human nature, as merely within itself; the adapting of it to political institutions; and the examination of it, not by theory, but experience, applying it to the knowledge of our errors, ascending to their sources, and labouring to divert their course, are, all subjects to awaken our attention. This last species of enquiry is that on which we now beg leave to fix, persuaded that the writer who mixes some mistakes amongst his observations and comparisons, may be of use to him

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him that follows; whilst the examiner, that wanders wildly from his mark, not only leaves truth behind him, at a distance, but becomes liable to deceive others, by directing them to a wrong road.

There was a time, when every author seemed infected with the rage of concluding from particulars, to generals. Pretensions to genius, of all pretensions the most extravagant, were then exceedingly the mode. A leading principle explained, some few consequences, lightly deduced, and some few facts, either well or ill adjusted to the proposed conclusion, were sufficient to bear away the prize due to invention and imagination. It was not possible for this too great facility of acquiring renown to last long. It arose from an intercourse of superficially-instructed writers, with readers who knew nothing. The case is now altered. Scarcely hath the reader of understanding, and application, opened a book, but he can estimate its real value. If the work be

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without order and connection, he criticises the particular passages with impartiality, and continues to read on. If it be obscure, he reasonably suspects that the author did not, absolutely, understand himself: but if it be systematical, opiniative, and fallacious, he throws it aside, and will not suffer it to be spoken of. These enlightened, and perhaps, too well informed readers, unfortunately employed, even to a degree of satiety, know that to toil in the pursuit of truths, to confirm, assemble, and dispose them in proper order, is the real employment of the man of genius: but this employment is, at once, slow, and gradual. The inventor hath marked out his path: by walking after him, one is no longer surprized at seeing him arrived, and the multitude, having heard, that genius hath wings, are unwilling to acknowledge the print of his footsteps.

Let us leave to these celebrated men, who have drawn upon themselves praise,  
and

## INTRODUCTION. V

and persecution, the task of pleading their own cause, and avenging the rights of reason: let us even fear lest we should be thought more rash in forming, than provident in moderating this attempt: at least, before we engage in observations purely historical, and studious researches after facts, and the principles by which they were occasioned, let us examine for a moment, how far a simple speculation could have made us acquainted with the particular relations, the general tendencies, and, in short, all the qualities which are proper to, and characterize human nature. Prepared to conduct our readers through long, and winding ways, let us cast one glance upon the space which we must leave behind, and convince them that those easier, and more agreeable roads, the loss of which they may perhaps regret, are terminated only by extensive desarts.

To subsist, to unite itself, to multiply its species, is the general wish of nature;

the great business of every animated being. If society be essentially necessary to some amongst these, still it is but a secondary want, and subordinate to those which we have taken notice of before. The vulture, that lives only on its prey, that is dreaded by every other bird, and pursued by man, should daily take a different flight. It repairs, without distinction, to all places where it may with ease find something to devour; its subsistence is precarious and irregular: at one time, it is in want of food, and at another, possesses more than it can possibly consume: it must, therefore, provide against future necessities: it must hide its booty. In the night time, it must fix its retreat within the summits of the steepest rocks, or on the tops of lofty trees. On the contrary, the pigeons, and the starlings, which readily procure their nourishment, in the marshes and the fields, but whose defenceless condition exposes them to perpetual danger, seek, in society, those means of protection,

tection, which hurt not the means of subsistence. Such also is the custom amongst the quadrupeds: tigers, and wolves remain in solitude, whilst the hinds and deer graze all together: but at a certain time, a powerful imperious want springs up, and sinks all others in oblivion. The social animal avoids the rest of his class, to fix his choice on one: the desires of love, and shortly afterwards, the cares of his family, occupy his attention: but, in the species, which, brutally consummates the act of generation, and where several females are enjoyed by the same male, and several males unite themselves to one female, love makes little alteration in society: the sexes being indiscriminately mingled, the animals remain in herds, nor is society dissolved.

The less compound the organization of beings is, the more their operations bear a resemblance to each other. The nests of birds, the burrows of rabbits, and the hives of bees are common to the two



sexes. It is the same with regard to customs, founded on simple wants, they are themselves equally simple: deriving their origin from a necessity peculiar to all, they continue to be the same amongst all the individuals of the same species: it is thus that nature hath furnished us with the means of understanding them all, excepting our own, tolerably well. Were we to enter only into a physical enquiry, concerning the nature of man, we should find that the sense of feeling, and the perfection of speech, have secured to him the acquisition of such advantages over all the other animals, that his organization, becoming daily more and more complete, is at length rendered too complex to be invariable, and too subtile to be regular.

There is every reason to suppose that the undeviating attachment in a particular species, to one particular aliment, is less the consequence of an absolute necessity derived from their nature, than of the great, or more inconsiderable difficulty  
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with which they procure their food: some animals subsist equally on flesh and vegetables; by the chase, and in the pastures; but man, who by the exercise of his hands, and the peculiar privilege of speech, is blest with ability and ingenuity, can provide himself with every kind of sustenance, by hunting, fishing, the cultivation of the earth, and other methods. Should not this man, then, adopt different manners and customs, in conformity to his different means of subsistence? would the Esquimaux and the inhabitants of Greenland, who procure their nourishment from the oil of fish, eat of the aliment of the Iroquois and the Patagonians, whose chief food arises from the chase? or would all these imitate the Laplanders, whose domain is the desert, and whose diet is milk?

Love, or the impulsive power of multiplying the species, should give to every creature a more distinguishing characteristic. In fact, women are marked, in  
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physical order, by an essential difference; a difference which may possess its influence over the state of society, by rendering them fit for generation at every period of the year; and consequently strengthening the bond by which they are united to man. It should appear then, that amongst our species, the commerce of the sexes might be more frequently pursued, but not that a multitude of men and women should live promiscuously together. Farther, all physical inductions seem to prove that men and women should not remain too long in couples, like birds, and certain kinds of quadrupeds: the periods of love, gestation and delivery, being similar amongst such animals as are individuals of the same species, their situations are constantly alike, and the general order cannot be interrupted, but for an instant, by the competition of their wants; whereas, amongst mankind, desire, and the faculty of enjoying it, perpetually existing, the union of the pairs  
might

might be disturbed, whensoever one sex should find itself unable to answer to the urgent invitations of the other sex.

It is then difficult to define what human nature hath fixed, relative to the state of society; but it is, at once, frivolous and useless to propose these questions: "Are men in a state of mutual and perpetual war?" "are they born the friends or the enemies of each other?" ... they are friends, whilst lending to each other a reciprocal support, they can the more easily satisfy their mutual wants: they are enemies, whilst circumstances establishing a competition amongst themselves, several strive to obtain that which one only can enjoy. The savages who fish should be more united than the savages who hunt: the Nomades<sup>(a)</sup> should be more inseparable

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(a) Several nations or people were anciently so called on account of their having devoted themselves to the care of their flocks. As the richest pastures were the chief objects of their search, they shifted their abode as often as they perceived one spot to be more fertile than another spot. K.

rable than either. Observe the forests in the summer: at that period, each animal is at peace and unity with the rest; the stags are intermixed with hinds and fawns, they feed, they repose themselves in large herds; but, in September, upon this lately quiet spot, a furious war will kindle, and all the wood resound with bellowings. It hath already been observed, that this dreadful interval doth not exist amongst the human species, who have no particularly fixed time for generation. Theirs should only be the passing contest or the momentary dispute.

This then is the result of an attentive study of these important questions. Is it possible to establish a moral system on notions at once so frivolous and obscure? with such opinions, no reasonable traveller, prepared to land upon an unknown country, could risque the least conjecture on its legislation or its manners. There is nothing so fantastical and extraordinary but an instance of it may be found amongst mankind.

mankind. And must we still dispute on general principles, primitive laws, and final causes? let us bid defiance to these sublime ravings, for which nothing but genius can apologize, and rest contented with the assurance that the state of society hath effaced even the slightest traces of what is called the state of nature.

In fact, what are civilized men? if corrupted or amended, they are entirely new beings. They have, as it were, traded and accomplished an interchange of whatever might result from their reciprocal acquaintance. Man, before this time, searched out and chose his aliments; then having subsisted on them, betook himself to rest: but, from henceforth, confining himself, at frequent intervals, within his walls, and either alone, or in company with many of his species, he neither raises nor prepares his food, but awaits, with confidence, its arrival, although it be not seldom sent from places more distant than fifteen hundred miles from his abode.

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There are other desires, the covananting for which is less easy; and these are the desires of love. In every profession which we adopt, in every labour to which we apply, woman is essentially necessary; sometimes, indeed, the necessity of procuring our subsistence, rises in opposition to this other, no less imperious necessity. An attempt must, therefore, be made to reconcile the two. The manufacturer, the day-labourer, the servant, and the soldier can reside but little in the midst of their family: they take a wife, without taking a companion, nor is it possible for them to acquire her, but by being united to her in bonds more close and lasting than those, in which, the gentlest state of society could ever have involved us. The woman, alone, and immersed in an attention to her household affairs, is not less disobedient to the voice of nature. At the call of interest, maternal tenderness must be silent. If it be pointed out to her as a commendable frugality,

frugality, (b) she must suffer the offsprings of this imperfect union to be dispersed about the country, and suckled by mercenary nurses. Scarcely have they attained to the age of cultivating an acquaintance with their relations, before they are banished from their paternal seats, and immured in those prisons, called colleges, schools and convents. At length, when all these different strangers, who, notwithstanding, usurp the names of father, mother, son, and daughter, shall have met and become united, it will be absurdly expected that the children should treat their parents with an obedience and veneration equal to any which they might have felt arising from the remembrance, that under their roof, their infant weakness

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(b) It is on saving principles, that most of the women, engaged in profitable employments, trust their children to strange nurses: the care of an infant at the breast would occupy the mother's time too much, and stop the progress of her work.



ness was protected, and their dependance on that protection amply understood.

We will expatiate no longer on contrasts so exceedingly striking: possessed of too dangerous an attraction, how frequently have they occasioned the coolness of discussion, to degenerate into agreeable, but frivolous turns of wit! suffice it to remark, that they do not prove what is called the state of nature, to be preferable to the state of society, but, only, that the sense generally given to these expressions, is a very mistaken sense. If, by the state of nature, the most brutal state existing be solely understood, it may be said to reign not more amongst the savages, than in our forests and our fields. He who is become tired of his park, declares in favour of a walk amongst the meadows, because he loves to enjoy nature. Nevertheless he sees nothing but the fruit of a long and painful work. If we regard as natural, all which is within the order of nature; all which is accomplished

plished in consequence of its powers and its laws, then is there a state of nature as peculiar to the city, as to the country; to the tradesman, as to the husbandman; to the man that launches out into society, as to him that buries himself in solitude. (c) To argue still farther: in every condition is an irresistible attraction which impells all beings towards the acquisition of the best state that may be possible; and it is here that we must look for that physical revelation which is to serve as an oracle to all the legislators. The great error is the constantly withdrawing some part of the idea from the other parts, and giving way to general and empty decisions. Do we feel ourselves shocked at the corruption which infects the great cities?

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(c) That state in which all things are brought about by a natural and perfect unravelling, may be regarded as a state of nature: from hence it plainly follows that political societies are natural. (ἐκ τούτων ἔστι φανερόν ὅτι τῶν φύσει πολιτείαι) are the words of Aristotle, in his treatise on republics. b. 1. c. 2.

we oppose to it the rustic manners of the husbandman and the shepherd. In our addresses to present, and our eulogies on former kings, we cite Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If a system of morals be recommended to an opulent and commercial nation, the Scythians and the Spartans are brought forward as models for its imitation. Were it not better to pursue a different method? let every thing that is faulty, without being at all necessary, be prescribed. Let also the nature of those things, which are faulty, but yet, in some measure necessary, be examined to the bottom; that is, let the result of physical circumstances be so scrupulously sifted, as to accomplish the drawing of the best part that can be taken. All nations cannot be under the same government: even in the same nation, similar laws, policies, and customs cannot be adapted to the genius of every town and every class of citizens; yet all have a general

neral pretension to the greatest advantages, which can be secured to them.

Peace is the first blessing which a people should implore. Peace is the great source of all order and of all good. What efforts can they make to give permanence to the benefits which they might enjoy, who are continually engaged in preparations to attack others, or to defend themselves? no land is cultivated, whilst the title to the enjoyment of it is litigated in a court of justice. War creates a ferocity of manners. It holds out such objects of glory and ambition, as the most unpolished minds may seize with little difficulty, and thus perverts our useful passions by ennobling our vices, and every where substituting force in the place of justice. The first step, therefore, towards accomplishing the happiness of mankind, should be to lengthen the duration of peace, and lessen the frequency of war. Should this ever happen, there will be some room to imagine that the alteration is in sight, and

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that its progress is already begun. Such a reflection will engage us to pay a particular attention to whatsoever may relate to this grand object. To facilitate our observations, it may not, perhaps, be improper to examine, in this place, what are the causes of war; or rather, what are the reasons which determine one society of men to attack another society.

The first motive, which presents itself, is the desire of quitting a severe, unwholesome climate, for a climate more mild and healthy; a barren land, for a more fruitful land; an inconvenient habitation, for a more commodious habitation. The second motive is founded on a competition for several enjoyments, either necessary or useful; such as the power of hunting, fishing, and the possession of mines, &c. A third reason may be discovered in the ignorance and barbarity of some yet untutored people, who, destitute of every idea of moderation and equity, are apt to be easily exasperated, and make, for slight offences,

offences, the cruellest reprisals. The fourth cause is no more than the consequence of the same principle. It is occasioned by a stupid credulity, on the one hand, and the dominion of a delusive hierarchy on the other: a government, at once, tyrannical and intolerant, imposed upon the easy faith of human kind, by the jugglers amongst the savages; by the ancient priests of Ægypt, and of Æthiopia; by the Greeks, in the delivery of those celebrated oracles, which the superstition of former times attributed to God, and which the present times, have, with equal superstition, imputed to the devil. To conclude, the fifth motive, of all others the most powerful, and yet the most concealed, derives its source from every vice inherent to the constitution of the state. These are those interior vices, which may be considered as the hidden seed of almost every exterior war: in like manner, the defects in particular systems of politics give birth to civil wars.

Were we to peruse the annals of history, we should perceive how justly the origin of all the wars might be referred to one of these principles. If, also, we should at the same time, discover, from reflection, that the activity of these principles is blunted and decaying, we may reasonably hope that the condition of humanity is susceptible of amendment. On the other hand, if an examination of the most esteemed acts of particular legislatures, should convince us that all societies have formed themselves in a state of war, having no intention, save that of defending themselves at one time, and invading, and plundering at another, the result will still be, that against the future ages, the experience of the past ages can prove nothing. Let me go still farther. If the sole aim of all society and of all legislation had been calculated even to procure mankind the greatest happiness, its not having been yet acquired, can be no matter of astonishment. The antiquity of  
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the world is indeed attested by physical demonstration, but history proves that societies are still extremely recent; at least, they are recent in most parts of the globe. No; fifty generations (*d*) do not contain too unlimited a time to be spent in the

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(*d*) Reckoning sixty years to the duration of man's life, fifty generations will carry us back three thousand years; that is, into the fabulous ages. I allow that it is almost impossible for a succession of fifty persons to have existed, each of whose lives completed the course of sixty years: but as only the progress of knowledge is the matter in question, we need but reckon those men who died at an age sufficiently advanced to have acquired all the experience of life. I know that it is universally granted that the Chinese empire hath been established more than three thousand years; and that its forms of government (if accounts mistake not) are the most perfect and happy of all those of which we have any knowledge. The rest of the world also must be far advanced. The wisdom and stability, peculiar to the Chinese government, will prevent me from taking any notice of it in the course of this work; and, to confess the truth, I do not think myself sufficiently instructed in this point to write on it in a manner suitable to my wishes.

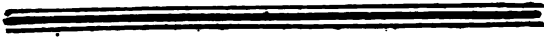


XXIV INTRODUCTION.

task of arriving at the perfect knowledge of man, in his physical and moral capacity; of estimating all the prejudices and all the ridiculous ideas which owe their birth, either to fear or hope; of daring to attack them in those intrenchments prepared for them by force or cunning; of forming a genius capable of governing; of collecting every different circumstance which may contribute to stop the tyrant in an intended act of usurpation; (an act, the perpetration of which may be effected by talents less elevated than those required to establish order and the happiness of the subject) in a word, of destroying every obstacle which the distance of places, the difficulty of arriving at them, and the varieties of lineaments, language, manners and opinions had thrown up against the reunion and harmony of particular nations: Still let us rest contented, that readers of a gloomier cast should turn aside with indignation from these expressions of our hopes: although

though they think it doubtful that the social world should ever reach perfection, yet may not this picture of the condition of humanity, through all its various revolutions, be sufficiently interesting to awaken their attention? will they esteem it an unbecoming employment, to examine the influence of every legislation, over the happiness of the people? if so many authors have written the history of men, will no one read, with some pleasure, the history of humanity? let us enter upon our course, not with the presumption arising from the vanity which arrogates to itself the merit of superior abilities, but with that confidence which an object, noble and unlimited, must naturally inspire: a confidence, not regulated, alone, by honest and disinterested views, but aiming at the preference which is more frequently given to esteem than to celebrity and applause.





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E S S A Y

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PUBLIC HAPPINESS.

C H A P. I.

*Remarks on the Egyptians, Assyrians, Medes, &c.*

A Melancholy idea must arise from the reflexion that the first epoch with which history presents us, owes its existence to war. ~~Since~~ or Bacchus, carrying the ivy on his hand, crosses the Nile, to ~~bring~~ the art of agriculture to the people, ~~which is now re-~~duced into a subjection to ~~the same~~ in ~~some~~

~~some~~

ages, after this period, Sesostris, at the head of a formidable army, marches towards the conquest of several nations, of whose name he, undoubtedly, was ignorant. These are the most distant æras of the ancient, and respectable Ægyptian monarchy, which, as it was distinguished by two victorious kings, so, consequently, was it marked by two wars exceedingly unjust. The most singular circumstance was, that neither of the conquerors seemed to desire the possession of the country, which he had overcome. After having erected some monuments, and exacted tributes, they marched on, like travellers in arms, determined to be the masters of every place they visited.

No one, not disposed to affect an universal doubt of the authenticity of all ancient history, can disbelieve the existence of two men, celebrated for intrepidity and understanding, who have given rise to the accounts which the Ægyptians delivered of their Osiris, and their Sesostris: but the fables, in which these accounts are wrapped, the attributing the invention of agriculture to Osiris, and the antiquity of all the traditions drawn from Herodotus, sufficiently prove that they relate  
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to the infancy of society, and that they have been disfigured by time. The most incontrovertible testimony in the writings of Herodotus, and Diodorus Siculus, alludes to that long interval of peace, which the Ægyptian monarchy, above all others, enjoyed after the expiration of the fabulous ages: nor can we easily give way to scepticism, if we consider that these same historians who have not transmitted to us the memorials of any war, from the reign of Sesostris, to that of Apries, have, notwithstanding, enumerated the names of those princes, who filled up this interval, and also entered largely into the several particulars of their lives.

If, in the beginning of this essay, it be possible to unite the idea of an exceedingly long, and almost constant peace, with the idea of so distant and reputable a monarchy, it must prove a very favourable omen. It is, then, clear, that whatsoever the nature of man may be, good laws, and excellent administrations can suppress the propensities to war. Had all the earth been peopled with nations, governed like the inhabitants of Ægypt, the problem of the possibility of a perpetual peace might have been demonstrated

frated by facts, or perhaps, never proposed: no contradiction, however, can be brought against the supposition that the world may one day prove sufficiently enlightened, universally to bear a mode of government, to which a smaller portion of mankind had formerly submitted. All that relates to Ægypt is so well known, that it is unnecessary to tire the learned reader with a repetition of that matter which he hath so often perused in other treatises: I must even imagine, that he is ready to inform me, that, in truth, the Ægyptians enjoyed excellent laws; but that the relation of those laws to the support of peace, and the desire of confirming its duration, is not easily discernible; that we know but little of the real constitution and government of this nation, in which we observe a king exceedingly constrained, and tied down to the minutest forms; (e) that we have  
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(e) Diodorus Siculus observes, that the employments of the kings of Ægypt were so exactly marked, and portioned out into distinct divisions of time, that they could neither eat, nor sleep; nor, even enjoy their own wives, but at the hour appointed by the laws; so that their kings may be said to have gotten children, as our princes publish their ordinances; by the advice of council.

as little information concerning the person who watched over the execution of those laws, to which he was obliged to conform; that, whilst we are certain that their priests were invested with great powers, we cannot determine whether they were legislative, or resisting powers; and, in short, that all is involved in obscurity, till we arrive at that detail, entered into by Diodorus. To this I the more readily agree, as it operates in favour of my argument; it cannot be expected that I should give my readers an exact insight into the nature of the government peculiar to the Ægyptians; but since so many particulars are concealed from us, let us hold by those we have: let us assert, with Solon, that if their laws were not, absolutely, the best existing, at least, they were the best for them, as having proved so very efficacious. Our nicest examinations into this subject will, doubtless, be clouded with obscurities; yet we shall find some excellent materials: the long duration of this monarchy, the abundance of its enjoyments, and the applause which it hath received from every people, and from every age, should be sufficient to confirm our most favourable opinion of those  
other



other circumstances, with which we cannot pretend to be acquainted.

On the contrary, if we turn our attention towards the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medes, and the Lydians, we shall, every where, observe a despotism, the most absolute, a series of victories, the most absurd, an avarice insatiably collecting riches, and an extravagance which perverted them to the worst purposes.

Ninus, the first fatal star that shone in that horizon, hath stained the page of history with cruelty, and injustice. He attacked, and defeated the people, since called the Babylonians. He made their king a prisoner, and ordered that he should be executed with his children. He, then, marched against the Medes, put them to flight, and having taken Pharnus, their sovereign, he not only crucified the unhappy prince, but even his wife, and all his offspring: from thence, he turned his arms towards Bactria, and added it to his conquests. Semiramis, the accomplice, the queen, and the assassin of this tyrant, did justice to the world in the destruction of the author of those cruelties which they had felt; and in her turn committed crimes for which she

She should have met an equal fate. Her ambition approached to madness; she subdued, successively, Media, Persia, Lybia, and Æthiopia; at length, as if she would have subdued nature herself, she levelled mountains, changed the course of rivers, and raised, even to the skies, the monuments of her folly.

To these cruelly-heroic reigns, succeeded some intervals of repose. There were kings, doubtless, worthy of our applause, (for tradition has not named them) who gave mankind a breathing time, and were so fortunate as to discover pleasures, the enjoyment of which, was destructive to no one. Sardanapalus, the last of this dynasty, too effeminate, but much less guilty than the greater part of the chieftains of history, hath been treated with contempt by ancient writers, whose spirit of invective hath not been lost upon the moderns. Like Darius, Persius, and many other princes, his empire was torn from him, because he did not gain a battle: and yet, he chose death in preference to ignominious bondage: no monarchs, with their queens, and children, were ever executed by his command; he never made his subjects groan and sweat beneath the toil of piling

stones the one upon the other. The most pious authors have, notwithstanding, left Ninus and Semiramis in the peaceable possession of reputation, to direct the united force of all their satire upon Sardanapalus. The Medes, having conquered Sardanapalus, soon subdued all Persia. They, then, attacked the new Assyrian empire, founded by Belus, but whilst they were, obstinately, pursuing this war, they were assaulted, in their turn, by the Cimmeric Scythians; and after having been constrained to divide the empire between them, they got rid of their inconvenient guests, destroying them by an act of treachery, of all others, the most unmanly.

The next in turn is Cyrus. History doth not declare, precisely, on what occasion the war was kindled between this celebrated conqueror, and a prince, whose mingled lot of good, and ill fortune, hath rendered him no less remarkable. I mean Cræsus, king of Lydia, a name in the mouths of many, who are ignorant of his history. It is equally difficult to assign the real causes to all the other wars which Cyrus waged, and which, in the end, made him the sovereign of Asia.

So

So different are the recitals of Herodotus, and Xenophon, that every competent reader, observing, on the one hand, such fabulous puerilities, and on the other, a moral treatise, thrown into scenes of action, seems, as it were, reduced to a kind of choice between the Orlando of Ariosto, and the Telemachus of Fenelon. Let us, therefore, content ourselves with believing, that there existed, in former times, a conqueror named Cyrus, who subdued Asia, and founded the Persian empire. (f)

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(f) Mr. Rollin is far from having thrown much light on the obscurity of these distant ages. He begins by relating, with all the gravity of history, the little romantic details with which Xenophon has judged proper to adorn his cyropædia. It must, however, be confessed that the insinuation that, possibly, not a word of truth is in all this, frequently escapes him: nevertheless, he continues to take the account of all the principal facts as far down as the battle of Thymbria, from Xenophon. Then, shifting round to the testimony of Herodotus, he will have it that Cyrus engages in a fresh battle near Sardis, where he makes him have recourse once more to the stratagem of opposing camels, to the cavalry, without perceiving that all this is but the same story, variously related by two different authors. He goes farther, not to lose the history  
of

A sufficient number of facts hath already been advanced in a work not historical: let us, now, pass on to those suggestions which must naturally arise; and first, it may be observed

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of Croesus, who, on the funeral pile, invokes Solon, he supposes that this same Cyrus, whom he hath held out as a model to kings, had condemned his enemy, to be burnt alive: and this he advances without deigning to make the smallest apology for this extravagant inequality in the character of his hero. I cannot deny myself the liberty of making one more observation. He had a greater advantage in printing his work forty years ago, when the language met with indulgence, than he could have expected now. Here follows an example of Mr. Rollin's style: speaking of Gobrias, the Assyrian general, he says: "le roi mort depuis peu qui en connoissoit tout le merite, et le consideroit extrêmement, avoit resolu de donner sa fille en mariage a son fils." I believe that every thinking reader will be offended with this grammatical incest, which so religious a man as Mr. Rollin, has made the king of Assyria commit; either the prince chose to marry his own daughter, to his own son; or the daughter of Gobrias, to the son of Gobrias. In some lines lower, Mr. Rollin talks of a citadel in which this same Gobrias lodged: (logesit)—lodge in a citadel! the ancient history, and the Romish history, which are, on many accounts, valuable productions, furnish faults still more disgusting than these.

Having given, with the cold fidelity of a translator, the verbal construction of this note, the author must  
pardon

served that as history hath not transmitted to us any accounts of the government of the people, of whom we have been treating, we can only form a judgement from the appearances of facts. These appearances acquaint us that the government was absolutely military, and despotic; and (g) it is well known

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that

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pardon me for thinking some parts of it, inconsistent with his natural spirit of liberality. The most eminent in the learned world have nothing about their characters so sacred, as to exempt them from a detection of their errors: but genius hath a title to respect, and the discovery of its mistakes, can never be too delicately exposed. It is impossible to peruse the French sentence, and the remarks on it, without a smile; yet it will not be, in either case, a smile of approbation. The meaning of Rollin is easily understood, and this facetious exposition, was beneath the wit that made it. The other charge is, indeed, of more consequence, and requires an abler advocate than I am, to confute it. The freedom with which our author criticises the style of Rollin, will not easily dispose him, to believe that the sincerity of Atterbury was equal to his complaisance. A passage in the letter which that exile wrote to Rollin, runs thus: *si Gallicè scisset Xenophon, non aliis illum in eo argumento quod tractas verbis usurum, non alio prorsus more scripturum judicem.*" K.

(g) It would be uncandid to attempt, in this place, to conceal the eulogies which Herodotus, and Xenophon have bestowed upon the ancient Persians. It is even

that a prince, ruling with unlimited authority, must have acquired that authority by the means of such an army as he could not have been master of, unless that he had waged war. We shall not, therefore, hesitate to assign the vices of government, and the ignorance of political, and moral principles, as the causes of those wars, to which we have, already alluded. And, here, the irruption of those Scythians who came from the Bosphorus, is well worthy of our notice. It may be seen, for the first time, how these inhabitants of the North, spread themselves through the most fertile countries, and triumphed over the most warlike nations. What is still more extraordinary, they made the  
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even necessary to confess, that (if Herodotus may be believed) this people were less barbarous than ourselves, as they never punished the first crime with death; and as the legislature had enacted no penalty against parricide, from the principle, that insanity alone could drive a man to the perpetration of such an act: but, exclusive of the impossibility that, merely, good civil laws can be sufficient to constitute a good form of government, it is evident that the manners of the Persians were more calculated to render the people warlike, and victorious, than to inspire them with a love of agriculture, and all the arts of peace.

same treaty with the Medes, into which they entered afterwards with the Roman emperors; that is to say, they stipulated with the ancient possessors, for the enjoyment of a joint partnership in their lands, and for that singular manner of reigning with others, in quality of guests. (*b*) It is clear then that this species of war refers to our first principle: the desire of quitting a rigorous climate, for a more mild climate.

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(*b*) Consult the remarks of l'Abbé du Bos, on the French monarchy, in which this ingenious author proves, that the Franks, and the Lombards, who settled in Gaul, Spain, and Italy, gave out that they were the guests (hospites) of the Romans, and that their chief stiled himself king of the Franks, and Lombards, but not king of the Gauls, and of Italy.



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C H A P. II.

*The means of estimating the happiness of mankind, and more particularly, the happiness of the people existing during the first ages of antiquity.*

OUR investigation of the first epochs of history must prove exceedingly useless, if, from the multitude of events with which it presents us, we were unable to draw some general facts; facts infinitely more certain than those which have been so sedulously transmitted to us, and which, like grains of dust, could have no weight, unless united in a single mass. The facts, to which we allude, are those important ones, which historians have almost constantly neglected, as if  
willing

willing to treat of every thing, excepting that which was incontestably true. It is not absolutely certain that Cyrus, at the head of one hundred thousand Persians, gained a victory over five hundred thousand Assyrians, Ægyptians, &c. or that Ninus built a city more than twenty-eight miles in length; but it is certain, on the one hand, that an army well disciplined, and commanded by a warlike king, triumphed over an ignorant, and undisciplined multitude; and, on the other hand, that a nation of slaves, almost deprived of sense, by the imposition of a galling yoke, were condemned to labour in obedience to the caprice of a mad, and arbitrary tyrant.

Can we, amongst all the speculations to which history may give occasion, discover one more excellent and more entitled to our attention, than that the great object of which is the happiness of human nature? many authors have, diligently, examined, how far one nation surpassed another, in religion, in temperance, and in valour: but no one hath attempted to discover which nation was the happiest. Were the Ægyptians, in this respect, superior to the Medes; the Medes

to the Greeks, and the Greeks to the Romans? these are points, to determine which, but little pains have yet been taken. If any one hath ventured to discuss the subject, his conclusions hath been drawn from vague, and insufficient principles.

One great, and common error, amidst a multitude of other errors, is the confounding the people with the government. The people are supposed to be happy, whensoever the government prospers: instead of keeping in view the good of individuals, nothing is considered but the growth, and duration of empires, as if the public prosperity, and the general felicity, were two inseparable matters. For this, the Cynic was, facetiously, told that he should have changed the maxim, "*salus populi suprema lex esto,*" into "*salus gubernantium suprema lex esto.*" I shall have more occasions than one to complain against these prejudices: but, for the present, I shall confine myself to those reflections which have been suggested to me by the facts under examination. I shall begin by an assertion that I do not think that any nation hath been happy, because it may have erected immense pyramids, or magnificent palaces. On the  
contrary,

contrary, I presume that these superb edifices, and vast monuments, indicated the poor condition, and limited abilities of the people who assisted in the raising of them. As this truth results from very extensive principles, I cannot dispense with the necessity of explaining them. They belong to the science of Economicks; a science equally difficult, and obscure; to define it, hath been the business of multitudes; but to agree in those definitions, the lot of few. These principles will, then, have some merit, should they prove true, and clear: and I dare flatter myself, that, in spite of the quantity of writings, which have appeared on this subject, they will not be destitute of novelty. It is, indeed, a cold, and dry discussion; but I should be guilty of injustice to the age in which I live, and to my readers, were I to feel an inclination to avoid it.

In every attempt to estimate the happiness, or the misery of the people, the imposts with which they were laden, have been almost the sole objects of consideration. No estimation hath been made of the rigour of these imposts, but from the mode in which they were levied; that is, according to their nearer,

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or more distant approach to the form of a tribute, and such a one, also, as the contributor was compelled to take from his private purse, and give to his sovereign. Now, it seems to me, that there is a more extensive, and sure method of estimating the condition of the subject, as it may bear some relation to the prince, in cases where the weight of the tax presses upon the first; as thus:

First: how many days in the year, or hours in the day, can a man work, without either incommoding himself, or becoming unhappy? one may perceive, at the first glance, that this question refers to the nature of the climate; to the constitution, and to the strength of men; to their education, to their aliments; &c. &c. all, cases, which may be easily resolved.

Secondly, how many days must a man work in the year, or, how many hours must he work in the day, to procure for himself that which is necessary to his preservation, and his ease? having resolved these questions, it will be no difficult matter to determine how many days in the year, or how many hours in the day, may remain for this man to dispose of: that is to say, how many may be demanded

of him, without robbing him either of the means of subsistence, or of welfare: so that, now, the whole matter rests upon an examination, whether the performance of that duty, which the sovereign exacts from him, be within, or beyond the time, which each man can spare from his absolutely necessary avocations.

In the interim, to draw from this exposition, all its resulting consequences, we must imagine that every part of the labour, exercised throughout the state, is equally divided amongst a set of individuals. I would suppose, for instance, that every man being obliged to build, furnish, and maintain an house; to procure, and dress his victuals; to equip himself with cloathing, &c. &c. must, consequently be, at once, a mason, a tiler, a cultivator of the ground, a cook, a weaver, a taylor, a shoe-maker, &c. &c. After this, it will be necessary to calculate either the number of days in the year, or of hours in the day, which must be set apart for this employment: and then, it must be determined what time he hath left upon his hands, to be disposed of, in the service of his sovereign. Thus, shall we be led to a just  
 decision

decision on the happiness, or the misery of the people.

Such as have exercised their thoughts on these economical matters, will, soon, perceive that it is this remaining time, which will, whenever it shall be thus employed, produce (either for the sovereign, or that person who may possess the right of managing it) the *net revenue*, which hath given birth to so many disputes. They will, also, be convinced that, if the demands of the sovereign become too excessive, the result will, immediately, be, that the subject, condemned to diminish the number of those hours, which he had destined to his own proper uses, must behold the fruits of all his industry, and culture, fallen to decay; in short, this same subject, thus losing the necessaries of his life, must either desert or perish.

Let us, now, endeavour to lead the question back, by degrees, to the proposed object. Let us examine, for instance, what conclusions, in support of the power, and the happiness of the Ægyptians, may be drawn from our knowledge of those immense monuments, for the raising of which, they have been so celebrated. This matter may be  
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seen in several different lights: first, the population of Ægypt having been extensive, it may have happened that the avocations from the other usual, and necessary labours, to those of assisting in the structure of these vast edifices, were not of such material consequence, because the work was subdivided amongst all the individuals, who, by turns, relieved each other.

Secondly, these same buildings might have occasioned the employment of all that time, which remained to be disposed of.

Thirdly, the population not having been sufficiently considerable, the portion of leisure time became too small, and occasioned a breaking in upon the time that should have been otherwise employed.

In the fourth place, possibly, the population was not considerable, but, at the same time, the wants of individuals were so limited, that they were unemployed enough to labour, without inconvenience, in the service of their sovereign.

It, now, remains to determine, under which of these four predicaments the Ægyptians fall. And, perhaps, this task is not so difficult as one might, at first, imagine it to be,



be, considering the great distance at which these objects are removed from us. We know that the inundations of the Nile diminished, and reduced, almost to nothing, the labours necessary to cultivation. The Ægyptians, therefore, were always sure of enjoying plentiful harvests at a small expence. On the other hand, we have no reason to suppose that these people were very refined, and extravagant, in the ornaments of their persons, the setting out of their tables, and other similar expences. It will not, therefore, be impossible to prove that each individual was employed but few days in the year, or few hours in the day, in procuring his necessary conveniencies. Indeed, a fair calculation might be made: it is a problem, which, being resolved by algebraical computations, will easily ascertain the numerical proportions.

One very important circumstance, is, that this will, naturally, lead us to a definition of luxury, and its effects. We may, at present call it, all the employment of time, which breaks in upon that, of which particulars, and the state, have a real want. According to this principle, it would be an equal luxury, were

were a nation, either, to apparel themselves with a stuff, which exacted, from each individual, an hour of labour, every day, or to dress the hair in a manner which, daily, took up the same space of time: but these two articles can only be considered as acts of luxury, in proportion to their encroachments upon that time, which cannot easily be spared from more necessary avocations.

And, here, I may be asked what possibility there is, of ascertaining the quantity of labour which each individual should reserve for his own use? Were it to happen that one particular person should be uneasy, unless he could be clad in velvet, would you esteem it necessary that such a portion of time should be employed in the raising of silk-worms, and the manufactory of velvets? perhaps so. And, why not, if that were possible? but the fact is, that a similar instance cannot arise. I shall, therefore, have no occasion to answer this objection, being able to advance a general principle; and this principle is, that the wants of particulars, should be limited by the wants of the state; that is, that private convenience should only follow public security, and that a certain enjoyment

is preferable to an extended enjoyment. I will add, that it is this consideration, which fixes limits to ease; and to luxury; so that luxury may, equally invade the province of the subject, and the province of the sovereign; and (not to mention the pomp of courts) is found as frequently amidst too numerous armies, as in the excesses of too magnificent an apparel: in short, if the Sybarites were too luxurious in their passion for effeminacy, the Spartans were equally involved in too extravagant a thirst of glory, and ambition.

It is an indisputable point, (or, at least, there is room to think it, in this philosophical age, an acknowledged truth) that the first object of all governments, should be to render the people happy. On every occasion where (plans having been concerted to aggrandize the government) the subjects become constrained to sacrifice a part of either those days in the year, or those hours in the day, so necessary to be employed towards their own private advantage, unpardonable excesses, and absolute abuses will, naturally, creep in. On the other hand, if a soft, and enervated people should refuse to furnish the state with such a portion of labour as may be  
necessary

necessary to maintain the public security, they will expose themselves, by so negligent a provision, an easy prey to the first power that may think proper to attack them: and this is a misfortune which they quickly must experience. But, how often may circumstances float between these two extremes, without ever meeting? it is this which multiplies, in so great a degree, the nature, and complexion of either the misery, or the prosperity, visible amongst different nations, and in different ages.

We shall give but a small number of instances of the various modes in which these causes may act. An ignorant, and slothful people, knowing neither their faculties, nor their wants, may remain in so annihilating a situation, as not even to employ, in proper uses, as much time as might be necessary to establish them in the possession of a peaceful and advantageous life. It may, also, happen, that the government, exacting from this people, a certain portion of labour, may accustom them to activity, and industry; and then, the sovereign, by augmenting the number of days in the year, or of hours in the day, which he might exact from the sub-

ject, would augment, in a similar proportion, the time which this subject would employ to his own advantage.

On the other hand, were a people to exist, who, enjoying a mild, and fruitful climate, and contented with the benefits of nature, feel no uneasiness of desire, we should pronounce this repose to be one of their chief essentials ; and ill-concerted must be that policy, which could wish to add any thing either to the labour which they had reserved for private uses, or that labour which they had destined for the service of the state.

After all, it may arrive that the state may exact too much from the people, without hastening on a national decay : but the bad consequences of this excess are still existing ; and if the subject be not robbed of that which is necessary to support life, at least, he is plundered of the means of making that life agreeable.

May we not, now, infer that the first case is naturally applicable to the inhabitants of the temperate climates, and even to the northern nations? that the second case extends to the southern nations, such as the Italians, the Greeks, and the Asiatics? and that the  
third

third case refers to almost every warlike nation, inhabiting the centre of Europe.

Another truth resulting from our principles, and which we have already shewn, is, that no *net revenue* exists, unless it be at all those times, whensoever individuals are obliged to work so long in the service of the state, as to break in upon those hours which they intended to have appropriated to their own private uses. In Ægypt, for instance, all the *net revenue* belonged to the king, to the priests, and to the soldiers; for it is remarkable, that, amongst this people, there were, strictly speaking, no owners of lands. The labourers, like the artisans, formed a class of mercenaries; or rather, the first were reduced to the rank of farmers, as they were only the mere cultivators of those lands, which belonged to the three great proprietaries of state.

That the *net revenue* of the Ægyptians was exceedingly considerable, will not admit of any doubt; particularly, if we reflect on the great number of priests which this nation entertained, and the enormous sums which their kings lavished on buildings: exclusive of all this, they had, constantly, on foot, an army of

four hundred thousand men, which will appear the more extravagant, when we recollect that Diodorus Siculus estimates the population of Ægypt, in the most flourishing times, at a rate no higher than the number of seven millions of inhabitants.<sup>(i)</sup>

We cannot very well determine whether or no the Ægyptians had occasion for such a multitude of troops. It appears, only, that this nation was neither engaged in broils, nor in victories, and, therefore, there is every reason to suppose that so numerous a militia was necessary to its preservation. As to the quantity of priests, which it supported, we can stile it nothing but an immoderate superfluity. It was the luxury of ignorance,  
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(i) I presume that a small contradiction is in this passage of Diodorus, for, at the same time that he only allows seven millions of inhabitants to Egypt, he says, that this kingdom contains a very great number of villages, and more than eighteen thousand towns. Now, were we to suppose that each town was peopled with only a thousand men, the number of inhabitants would amount to eighteen millions. After this chapter had been written, I met with the same observation in a dissertation by Mr. Hume, on the population of ancient nations. I shall, hereafter, have more occasions than one, to avail myself of this excellent work.

of all other luxuries the most detrimental, because equally incapable of exciting industry, and producing one agreeable enjoyment.

Let us, now, endeavour to form an estimate of the happiness which the Ægyptians might have enjoyed, if, instead of furnishing a subsistence for so many priests, and soldiers, they had employed all their leisure time in procuring the commodities of life: the conclusion will, too evidently, prove, that war, and superstition, have always been the greatest obstacles to the happiness of nations.

It follows also, from what we have advanced, that if a nation existed, which, without being poor, produced no *net revenue*, such a nation would be the happiest in the world: its individuals would employ all their leisure time in continually adding to their prosperity. But I shall be asked, how this nation could be thus happy, if it employed in labour the greatest part of its leisure time: to this I answer, that there are particular kinds of labour which add to our welfare: for instance, had men no cloathing, did they repose in the open air, they would be very happy by employing a part of their time, in building of houses, and making of habits:



or in other words, it would be extremely fortunate for the taylors that there were mafons, and for the mafons that there were taylors. In like manner, the individuals, whose only food had been bread, whose only liquor had been water, might rejoice over their increase of labour, if it furnished them with the hopes of, one day, eating meat, and drinking wine.

These principles are so true, that, were we to read history attentively, we should be perpetually induced to apply them. We shall perceive that, previous to the knowledge of the arts of procuring conveniencies, which declaimers call, the arts of luxury, in the times, when unpolished, or (if it be a more proper phrase) frugal nations, covered with only a simple cloak, subsisted on milk, barley, and lupines :(*k*) at this period, I say,  
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(*k*) A species of common bean, much in use, amongst the ancients.

Protogenes, drawing the picture of Jalyfus, is said to have taken no other nourishment than this pulse, mixed with water, lest the fire of his imagination, might be damped by the luxury of his food. The truth of this account is immaterial, but the lesson of  
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we shall perceive, that when population was sensibly increased, the only remedy known, and in use, was the drawing of lots to determine which of the individuals should go and seek his livelihood elsewhere.<sup>(1)</sup> In fact, how could this superabundant population, these new ramifications of families, induce the first proprietaries of lands to redouble their labour towards furnishing the means of their subsistence? It is certain that this could not have happened, unless these individuals laboured, on their parts, in works capable of exciting the inclinations of the first inhabitants.

This, I believe, is the earliest origin of colonies. Let us present to our imagination an unpolished people, consisting of ten thousand

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temperance, which it contains, is not unworthy of the painters notice : without some exercise of this uncommon virtue, even the hand of Reynolds might err, and all the glowing expression of West, become lifeless, and insipid. K.

(1) This policy was very opposite to the policy of Sir William Petty, who wished that, for the advantage of Britain, the inhabitants of Scotland and Ireland might be transported into England; and that, after this, these two kingdoms might be swallowed up by an inundation.

land individuals, who, without any great effort of either care, or labour, cultivate the ground which extends over their domain. Let us suppose, farther, that, instead of an increase in the population, at the rate of five thousand souls, the same number of artisans should land, at once, in this country, and, severally, propose to furnish habits, shoes, wine, and various utensils, in exchange for a certain quantity of productions cultivated by the first colonists: can it be doubted that these individuals, excited by the desire of obtaining the conveniencies of life, would re-double their labour to augment their harvests, and, of course, the means of exchange? thus, the enjoyment of one convenience would lead to the acquisition of another; new desires would follow close upon the last; and the original simplicity of dress, would, at length, break out into an attire as full of ornaments, as the wardrobe of a theatre.

Such would have been the progress of our commerce with America, if, instead of destroying the unfortunate inhabitants of that extensive country, we had been satisfied with civilizing their manners. To these reflections, we may add the observation, that more colonies

lonies might have been founded by republics, than by monarchies. A sovereign will never be at a loss to find objects of labour, sufficient to employ the whole flower of his people: whereas republics neither erect pyramids, nor plume themselves on having planted trees on eminencies that touch the clouds. It even seldom happens that they carry on those useful, but expensive works, the accomplishment of which, must be the joint result of power, and unanimity. Had Rome been free at that period when she counted fourscore thousand inhabitants, she might, perhaps, have founded a colony, instead of building the famous aqueduct, celebrated by the name, "Cloaca magna." It is certain that Tarquin could not have executed so great an undertaking, unless he had compelled that class of citizens, reserved for the employments of Agriculture and trade, to work so much more than they would have done, if all the individuals engaged in this enterprize had been dispersed amongst the artificans and the husbandmen. (*m*)

Let

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(*m*) It hath been a matter of astonishment to many that Rome, at that æra, not only in her infant state, but

Let us, therefore, conclude this digression, which is already much too long, by observing the impossibility of estimating the happiness of the people, in the first ages of antiquity, by either the frugality of some, or the extravagance of others. Their virtue can no more be proved from the great simplicity of their

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but engaged in war, could have constructed, in so short a time, this immense aqueduct. I have been equally surprized at it; but we may easily resolve this problem, on our own principles. According to Livy, and Dionysius Halicarnassens, the inhabitants of Rome, during the reign of Tarquin, were, in number, eighty thousand. Recollect the simplicity, and frugality of the ancient Romans, and, then, calculate the number of days in the year, or hours in the day, which an individual was obliged to employ for his own particular uses. Another method may be, to examine how small a number of individuals was needful to provide for the necessities of the rest. A passage from Dionysius is a still stronger confirmation of this opinion. Romulus, having conquered the Antemnates, and the Ceninians, sent three thousand to Rome, and thought it sufficient to replace this number with six hundred men. Hence, it appears that six hundred men could cultivate as great a quantity of land, as might be requisite to furnish a subsistence for three thousand. In the colony of Cayenne, the Negroes do not board with their masters: these last permit them to employ every Saturday in the fortnight, in the cultivation of those fields from whence they derive their food.

their manners, than their felicity from the profusion of their magnificence. Through every period, ignorance, despotism, war, and superstition, have, by turns, plundered mankind of the advantages with which nature had presented them.

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C H A P. III.

*On the middle æra of antiquity, and, principally,  
the Grecian æra.*

**T**HE subject of this chapter might induce me to lead off, with Milton, and hail the light which I, at length, discover, after having wandered so long in darkness.<sup>(n)</sup> If I must, still, call in history to my assistance; if it be expected that I should continue to produce a relation of past events, in support of the principles which I have established, it will not be necessary to consult either the childish stories of Herodotus, or the fabulous traditions

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(n) "Hail, holy light! offspring of heaven. &c."  
Paradise lost, book 3.

traditions of the poets. I am now armed with the authority of the most respectable authors. I can cite those celebrated writers to whom the present refined age looks up as models. Thucydides, Xenophon, Diodorus, and Pausanias, at once enlightening each other, have sufficiently paved the way to the discovery of truth. It is now certain that, whatsoever variations of patriotic zeal, a superstitious imagination, and, perhaps, too positive a stile, might have infused into their writings, the characters of Darius, Xerxes, Themistocles, and Aristides, will descend to posterity, as accurately marked, and as easily distinguishable, as the characters of Charles the Fifth, Gustavus, De Witt, and Barnevelt. As soon as we approach the Median war, but more particularly, the war of Peloponnesus, the veil of antiquity seems to withdraw itself, and the light of history beams, all at once, over the past ages. At the very name of Greece, enthusiasm becomes awake, and presents to our ideas a picture of vertue, courage, disinterestedness, and austerity of manners, united with perfection throughout the arts; all the delicacy of taste, and all the refinements of pleasure: so capable is admiration of join-  
ing



ing such opposite extremes! As for us, having proposed to ourselves, when we undertook this work, no other object but the welfare of humanity, we shall rest contented with referring all to this single consideration: it is on this, only, that we shall ground our commendations, and our censures.

Some citizens are associated, in deference to the advice of a brave and enterprising man.<sup>(o)</sup> Shortly afterwards magnificent buildings arise, the seas are covered with innumerable fleets, and the great King is insulted, attacked, and repulsed. Many rich and flourishing islands, together with a very considerable extent of coasts, are made tributary: Athens, the amiable, the splendid Athens, rises upon the ruins of barbarism, and its formidable ramparts seem only destined to afford a sanctuary to genius and the arts.

On the other side, an individual, whose ardour was vehement, whose discernment was profound, and, whose disposition was austere, conceives a project to reform the government of his country. Animated with  
a spirit

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(o) This was Theseus, who, first, assembled at Athens, the people before dispersed through Attica.

a spirit of patriotism, he contrives and executes the extraordinary plan of immortalizing this enthusiasm, by perpetuating it, from race to race. The haughty Sparta erects her brazen front against all Greece, and takes up arms, with a determination to quit them no more.

What memorable exploits have signalized the infancy of these republics! Marathon, Platea, Salamina, and the Micelæ, announced their future grandeur. In vain, did seventeen hundred thousand men land in Greece: there remain two cities: but what do I say? there remains only one: for Athens is annihilated, or exists but on the waves. Xerxes is, notwithstanding, put to flight, and pursued even to another continent.

What valuable and sacred bonds must have united these republics, which had been equal sharers in enterprises so glorious! Tyranny must disappear from every quarter; an inviolable association must connect all the members of Greece, to these two revered heads, and peace must flourish amidst the defenders of liberty.

It is, here, that we are obliged to change our language, and cast a second glance upon

the same objects. Shall we not, on a closer examination, perceive in the republic of Athens, an ill-disposed populace, vain, frivolous, ambitious, jealous, interested, incapable of marking out a proper conduct for themselves, and grudging their chiefs that fortune which they shared with them: full of sagacity in their discussions, but deprived of it, when it is necessary to determine: bi-gotted to an idle eloquence, always ready to abandon the depths of argument, for empty forms, and give the sound of words a preference to reason: unjust to their allies, ungrateful to their chiefs, and cruel to their enemies? . . . On the other side, if we turn our examination upon the Spartans, and scrutinize them more attentively, instead of perceiving the celebrated masterpiece of morality, and politics, we shall be at a loss how to describe them. Are they a nation? yet they cultivate no land; they despise its produce, and claim a merit from dispensing with it, as much as possible. Are they a society? yet the ties of families, of marriage, of parentage, of love, and of friendship are entirely unknown to them. The bonds which join the women to their husbands, are precarious,  
and

and uncertain: the children do not belong to their own fathers: nature is sentenced to be silent. Only one imperious voice is heard. The *country* expects, claims, and possesses every thing; and yet it neither gives, nor offers, nor promises any thing. What then is Sparta? an army always under arms; if it be not, rather, one vast monastery. In fact, when we observe, on the one hand, their continual exercises, their mock fights, and their absolute renunciation of arts, agriculture, and commerce; and, on the other hand, their severe disciplines, their macerations, their refectories, and their public ceremonies, we shall be inclined to suppose ourselves, at one moment, in the fortrefs of Spandaw, and at another, in the convents of the Camaldulians.<sup>(p)</sup> What heart, un-

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(p) The Camaldulians form a religious order, instituted by St. Romauld, and take their name from a small plain, called Camaldali, on the mount Apennine, in the state of Florence. At first, the cells of these devotees were separate, nor did they ever meet but at the hour of public prayer. They, annually, observed an inviolable silence, either during Lent, or the space of one hundred days. Twice only in the week, they quitted their fare of bread and water, to feast on herbs.

Their

less it were defended by the three-fold shield of erudition, but would shudder with as much terror, at the recital of the Lacedæmonian manners, as at that of the severities, practised by the Fakirs, (q) and Jammaboes? (r)  
 , Already,

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Their austerities have been lately mitigated by new regulations, and as this hermitage is now becoming rich, perhaps its inhabitants may soften, by degrees, into something like men of the world. The founders of these sects were equally ignorant of human nature, and its all-bounteous Lord. Whatever superstition, and the extravagancies of religion may advance, it is certain that the creature, who flies without reluctance from society, is more than contemptible; and it is probable, that to the Creator, the rational enjoyment of every thing which he hath given us, is not the least acceptable act of thanksgiving. K.

(q) The mortifications of these oriental Monks exceed all belief. Some cut their bodies with knives; others remain, a whole life-time, in one posture. It hath been said that the number of Fakirs in India, amounts to more than two millions. K.

(r) "The Jammaboes are Japanese hermits, divided into two orders; the order of Tosanfa, and the order of Fonsanfa. The Jammaboes of the first order are obliged to climb up the dangerous sides of the mountain Fikoosan, once, in the course of each year. It is ridiculously, and perhaps artfully asserted, that such as ascend it, in a state of impurity, are seized with madness. The Jammaboes of the second order, have, also, their mountain, to whose top they must, annually clamber;

Already, I seem to hear many voices raised against me, and opposing to my observations, the power, and the duration of this republic. They dwell, also, on the circumstances of its having triumphed, first, over the Persians, and afterwards, over all the Greeks. It is true, that they do not inform me, that the Athenians alone decided the success of the Median war, by the victory at Marathon,<sup>(s)</sup> a victory, of which a vain pretext, extremely suspicious on a similar occasion, deprived the Lacedemonians. They do not add, that they were, by turns, vanquished by all the people of Greece; and even by those the least celebrated; to begin, for instance, with the

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Messinians,

clamber; and here too, the rash adventurer must expect to be dashed to pieces, if not free from all contamination. Their food consists of herbs, and water; they practise the most severe austerities, and impudently boast that they are great adepts in magic: the multitude, too stupid to detect the tricks of these religious jugglers, have contributed not a little to support their pretensions, to the power of working miracles." K.

(s) It may be objected that this victory was no interruption to the second expedition of the Persians: but would the Greeks have gained the battle of Plataea, if they had not felt that confidence which their first success inspired?

Messinians, and end with the Thebans.<sup>(1)</sup> They are cautious of confessing, that it was with the succours and the treasure of the Persians, that they accomplished the conquest of the Athenians, their ancient allies. But when it shall have been proved, that Sparta was indebted to its constitution alone, for all its splendor, and length of existence, will it follow

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(1) The war waged by the Lacedæmonians, against the Ilotes, and the Messinians lasted more than ten years, with equal advantages to each party. Nevertheless, the Messinians were not Monks of the reformed order of Lycurgus. Thucydides (b. 1.) relates that the Ilotes having fled to Ithomus, the Lacedæmonians were compelled to avail themselves of the assistance of the Athenians before they could take this place. In the famous war of Peloponnesus, the Spartans were defeated at the same time, on land, and at sea, by Alcibiades. On another occasion, forty-seven of their galleys were at first compelled to sheer off, and afterwards dispersed by Phormio, the Athenian, who commanded only twenty galleys. In like manner, Thrasibulus overcame Callicratidas who commanded the Spartan fleet. No one is ignorant of their total defeat at Leuctra, and Mantinea; and that if Epaminondas had survived his last victory, Sparta had been ruined. Do they who magnify so greatly the advantages which the Spartans gained over the Athenians, towards the conclusion of the Peloponnesian war, recollect, that in the

follow that such a constitution could have merited the approbation of an enlightened and philosophical age? if it hath not rendered men either more virtuous, or (what is much the same) more happy: if it hath not confirmed the felicity, either of Sparta her-

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self,

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the course of this war, the former adopted the humiliating expedient of sending embassadors to the latter to sue for peace. And that even one of these embassadors had the meanness to confess, that nothing but a subsidy from the king of Persia, enabled his countrymen to carry on the war. (See Diod. Sic.) It evidently appears, that the success of Sparta, in the war of Peloponnesus, may be attributed to these three causes: the plague at Athens, the expedition to Sicily, and the assistance of the Persians. Now I see no affinity between these three causes, and the reformatory of Lycurgus. The injustice which reigned in the policy of Sparta, was a circumstance so well known amongst the Greeks, that Polybius, endeavouring to paint the Etolians in the most odious light, as guilty of infractions in their treaties, compares them to the Lacedaemonians; he quotes, on this occasion, two incidents, by which they may be better known. Pheidias (says he) having made his entry, treacherously, into the city of Thebes, and become possessed of it, the Lacedaemonians punished the author of the conspiracy, but left a garrison in the place. After having proclaimed that they restored all the Grecian cities to their liberty, they appointed over them, every one of the governors whom they had before settled, there.



self, or of her neighbours, shall we be still so blind as to lavish upon it such enthusiastic admiration, and that on the mere credit of Xenophon and Plutarch? If it be alledged that the Spartans were happy, in spite of their poverty, and severity of manners, it may be answered, that the inclination which the greater part of their magistrates felt, to possess riches, and honours, is a proof that they only despised them, in proportion to their being ignorant of them. Observe a Pausanias(*u*) selling his country to the tyrant,

over

(*u*) The presents, and the promises of the king of *Persia* were irresistible temptations to Pausanias, already disgusted at the behaviour of the allies. Not satisfied with having betrayed the *Lacedemonian* interests, he aspired to the sovereignty of *Greece*. The *Ephori*, jealous of his ambitious projects, recalled him. Convincing proofs were as yet wanting against a man, whose conduct was violently tainted by the breath of suspicion. At length, the *Spartans* were relieved from this suspense, by the evidence of a slave, who produced a letter which he had received from *Pausanias*, with orders to deliver it to *Artabazes*. The criminal, thus detected, took refuge in the temple of *Minerva*. The door was blocked up, whilst his mother, a female *Brutus*, assisted in the punishment of an unworthy son, and brought the first stone, to prevent his flight: in this confinement, Pausanias was starved to death. K.

over whom he had lately triumphed; and selling it, even in the very moment, when he was intoxicated with success at Platea. Behold a Lyfander bargaining with the governors of the Persian provinces, for the fate of Sparta, and of Athens: a Gylippus,(x) who robs his general, and, at once, reveals to his countrymen, the treasure and the theft. Such were these citizens; at home, humble and submissive; abroad, arrogant, ambitious and tyrannical; in these respects, like bold, intriguing monks, who, after having overthrown provinces, and even whole states, perceive themselves compelled to retire again within their cloisters, where, in silent indignation, they bend beneath the laws of obedience and austeritv.

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(x) *Lyfander*, who had received presents, in return for promises, which he never intended to perform, entrusted to *Gylippus*, the care of conveying to *Sparta*, the treasures which had been collected, during the campaign, and which amounted to fifteen hundred talents, exclusive of the crowns of gold, given by the different cities. *Gylippus* unripped the sacks, at the bottom, stole three hundred talents, and then, having very dexterously sown up the openings, concluded that it must be difficult to detect him; he was mistaken: the written accounts of the enclosed money were concealed within each sack, and betrayed his treachery. To avoid death, he fled into exile. K.

What hath been already advanced, may serve to ascertain the vertue of the Lacedemonians. On this occasion, one might safely appeal to their admirers, who have never yet been able to disguise from us, that inhumanity so conspicuous and universal amongst this people, and of which no other country furnished an example.

We wish that it were possible to conceal the existence of a government, so ferocious, as to have judged it proper to have treated men, as they would have treated savage animals, whom it might be necessary to destroy, as often as they multiplied too fast. As we practice the hunting of stags, and wild boars, so, the Spartans sent their young men to the chace of the Ilotes. When these unfortunate wretches became sufficiently numerous to give uneasiness to their masters, all kinds of ambuscades were placed to ensnare them; their assailants concealed themselves, at one time, behind the thickets, and at another time, taking the advantage of the night, they traversed the country, and murdered every individual whom they met, incapable of defending himself. What renders this custom still more horrid, is, that it was  
not

not the mere result of an act of momentary fury, but of formal habit, and bore the name of "*Kruptia*" from the Greek word *Κρυπῶ*, to hide ones self. At the relation of such shocking circumstances, the pen drops from my hand; but my indignation is less directed against the Spartans, than against those authors who have, coldly, transmitted to us, the detail of these execrable facts, and, complaisantly, expatiated on the praises of the barbarous people, who committed them. Hence, I have been induced to think that history, thus written, may become too dangerous to be perused by youth, in general, and by young princes, in particular. It seems a kind of high treason against humanity, to mention such atrocious facts, without invoking posterity to turn from them, with horror.

After such instances, it would be needless to dwell upon the base, and groundless jealousy, which, towards the close of the Median war, provoked the Spartans to hinder the Athenians from building their walls; or to relate the snares prepared for the immortal Themistocles; the massacre of the Athenian Greeks, or the allies of Athens, at the open-  
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ing of the Peloponnesian war; and their advising the people of Syracuse to put to the sword all that Athenian army, which had been forced to surrender themselves prisoners.

Such was the virtue of Sparta; and such was the morality of that republic, which became an example to Greece, and which hath been so often proposed as an example to our corrupted ages. O philosophy! O reason! O humanity! shall the man of learning, and the politician, at no period, be introduced to your acquaintance?

It were to be wished, at least, that the conduct of the other Grecians, had been contrasted with the conduct of the Lacedemonians: but it cannot be denied that humanity was a virtue to which these people, in general, were strangers. In vain did learning, and the arts arrive to fix their abode at Athens. The decrees issued against Mitylene, and the inhabitants of Sicyon, are such monuments of cruelty, as sufficiently prove the superiority of our modern philosophy, over that which could accommodate itself to such abominations. It is beyond dispute that their articles of war permitted the putting of prisoners to death. The Corinthians, the Corcyrians, and the other

Other people of Greece, to be less celebrated, were not less cruel than the Spartans, and Athenians.(y) In short, we are obliged to confess that what is called the fine age of Greece, was a scene of torture, and punishment, inflicted on humanity.

Let us, now, hasten to obviate the disagreeable conclusions, which may be drawn from such a confession. Is it possible, then, (it will be said) that this æra, enlarged on with such expressions of horror, can be any other, than the æra of the fine arts, and polite literature?(z) If, as the human understanding became enlightened, the depravity of the heart increased, what hope have we  
from

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(y) At the beginning of the war of Epidaurus, the Corcyrians, after an advantage gained over their allies, the Corinthians, put all such prisoners, as had not been born in Greece, to the sword.

(z) I have been so unfashionable as to reject the expression "belles lettres" which hath been naturalized in our tongue as early as in the time of Addison, if not earlier. *The exactness of the other, is to admit of something like discourse, especially in what regards the belles lettres.* . . . . *Tatler.* Perhaps, I have not rendered the original into a term equally significant, but I see, with indignation our excellent language, too often deviating towards a Gallic phraseology, and that I might avoid it, have used every freedom of construction allowable in the fidelity of translation. K.

from the present and the future ages? what relation then doth the progress of the mind, bear to the augmentation of public happiness?

Here, a croud of answers pour in, at once, upon me: I am puzzled, either how to chuse, or in what manner to digest them. Let me, however, begin by asserting that the human understanding proceeds at a slow, and gradual pace. Its infancy is employed in the cultivation of painting, sculpture, and architecture, which we may call the agreeable arts; and in the study, and profession of poetry, and music, which we may stile an exertion of frivolous talents. A taste for discussion follows at some distance, and is attended by a subtilty of reasoning, a spirit of controversy, and a Logomachia ;(a) till, all opinions becoming equally false, and equally specious, reason, fatigued with floating in uncertainty, embraces the side of doubt, and

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(a) These dialectical subtilties are, facetiously, ridiculed by Lucian, who, after having observed that the Sophists supported their opinions so well, that they were perpetually crying out either yes, or no, as they affirmed, or denied, adds that they may be compared to sleepers, in a carriage, whose wavering heads seem, by turns, to nod in contradiction, and with assent.

experiment, and thus forms, by little, and little, the true, and (if one may so call it) the last philosophy.

I, now, apply this principle, and examine what progress philosophy, and politics have made amongst the Greeks. A judgement may be formed of philosophy, by adopting two methods: the first method is to examine it, as in itself; and the second method is to observe the alterations which it hath produced in the manners of the people.

It is well known that, before the time of Socrates, philosophy had absolutely neglected morality, to indulge itself in the empty systems of cosmogony, and theogony; (b) (c)  
and

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(b) Socrates boasted of having occasioned philosophy to descend from Heaven, where she had been confined, and give him her hand that he might lead her back to earth. It must be confessed, that, then at least, she sat out upon an idle journey. She might, certainly, have been more useful, not only when situated in Heaven, where she might have discovered the planetary system; but when above the surface of the earth, where, by dint of observation, she might doubtless, have acquired a knowledge of some physical truths, more useful to men, than all the morality of Plato: and, here, it may be remarked, that more errors than might be, at first, suspected, derived their  
source



and that, even, when the scholastic taste was veering round to the study of morality, this science still retained much of its predominant spirit, nor ever became fixed upon a solid basis. But were we to judge of causes, by their effects, could we stile that people philosophical, whose individuals were addicted to the most extravagant superstition; (*d*) who were not  
cruel

source from an ignorance of physics; and that it is impossible but that, in the long run, a good physical system must introduce a good philosophical system.

(*c*) The Greeks were engaged in several wars, on a religious account, before the war of Peloponnesus. One of these wars, and the Persian war, undertaken by Philip of Macedon, pointed to much the same objects.

(*d*) It is exceedingly ridiculous to observe Sparta, and Athens, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, ready to contest, even with violence, for the first rank, and the government of Greece, and opening their debates with mutual, and childish reproaches, on account of pretended acts of profanation. Eschines, in his harangue against Ctesipho, relates, also, that, in the time of Solon, the Acrogallides, and the Syrians, having profaned the Delphic temple, the oracle directed that a war should be waged against these people, that they should be reduced to slavery; and that their lands should be consecrated to Apollo; Diana, Latona, and Minerva: by the advice of Solon, all this was executed.

cruel to their enemies, alone, but still more so to those whom fortune had thrown within their power ; and who, insensible to the benefits of nature, and all their proper uses, placed their whole happiness in glory, and their whole glory in war ? no, if wisdom be the art of living in felicity ; and if (as its name imports) philosophy be, truly, the love of wisdom, then, the Greeks never were philosophers.

Nothing, now, remains but the science of politics : to strip these celebrated republicans of their pretensions to this science, doth not, at the first glance, appear an easy task. Yet, even under the possibility of being accused of having risked a rash opinion, we shall not scruple to advance, that their knowledge of politics was exceedingly imperfect, and much like that which they had formed of morality, and philosophy. It will not be difficult to prove this, whether we consider their system of politics, in its general relation to the nations amongst themselves, or in its more distinct relation to the particular government of each people. The first point of view presents to us, the Greeks, rash, and inconsiderate ; relinquishing the project of a necessary confederacy, almost as soon as they had form-

ed it; establishing a spirit of tyranny, and usurpation, in the two chief republics, without fixing any equal balance of power, in the rest: Sparta, and Athens, ambitious without principle, confining all their politics, the one, within the forcible establishment of an Oligarchy,<sup>(e)</sup> and the other, within a no less violently conducted introduction of Democracy; the first, in short, so forgetful of justice, and her real interests, as to have recourse to the king of Persia, and, thus, avail herself of an enemy to injure her allies. If we, next, examine that interior system of politics, which determines on the form of the  
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(e) Sparta not contented with having established Oligarchy, in preference to Democracy, hath incurred the indelible, and infamous reproach, entailed on all advocates for tyranny. Witness the thirty tyrants of Athens, and the protection which she granted to Dionysius the tyrant against the people of Syracuse. It must be added that we are far from being the sole accusers of this republick, for having promulgated the first principles of a policy so pernicious to humanity. Sallust hath long since given us the example. "Postea vero quam in Asia Cyrus, in Græcia Lacedemonii, atque Athenienses cœpere urbes atque nationes subigere, libidinem dominandi causam belli habere, maximam gloriam in maximo imperio putare, &c. . . . in Catil.

government, we shall perceive that, here, as in all other things, the Greeks manifested a greater share of spirit, than reason. And yet, whatever liberties we may have taken with the Spartans, we cannot, possibly, pronounce the name of Lycurgus, without offering a tribute of admiration to the sagacity of his mind, and the extent of his genius. It is not to be denied, but that his laws were conceived in an uncommon depth of thought, and that a very singular unity pervaded every part of his plan. But was his project a reasonable project? I pass over in silence, that particular idea of making, entirely, a people of soldiers, and I allow that the Spartans should have been as regularly brought up to the profession of arms, as Emilius, to that of a carpenter; but if, to fix the maintenance of liberty, defensive wars, only, were undertaken, would it not have followed that sooner, or later, having neither walls, nor strong holds, they must have been as effectually subdued, as they concluded themselves to be, after the battle of Leuctra? If their courage, and discipline ensured to them no decisive advantages, there must have arisen an absolute certainty, that,

with the nature of their conquests, their spirit must have, also, varied; and that, by degrees, they must have assumed the manners, and the vices of the people, whom they had subdued? *(f)* might they not, also, have foreseen, that, at some future period, the new improvements in the military art, would render money as necessary as valor towards the support of war. Was it natural, in this case,

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*(f)* I shall have more occasions than one to remark, that, a state of ease, and tranquility, a rich system of agriculture, and an active industry, are the goals to which every state directs its course: for this reason, I have ventured to compare the greater part of our legislators, to those sensible persons, who, having met a troop of men, upon the road, gave them the most excellent directions in what manner to conduct themselves on their way; but as they had made no provisions either against their arrival, or to accomplish their establishment, this multitude, having reached the end of their journey, perceive themselves entirely disconcerted, and equally unable either to fix their residence, or to return.

Such, perhaps, at present, is the fate of the English colonies. In this respect, Locke was the wisest, and Lycurgus the most rash of all the legislators. The former stipulated that his laws for the province of Pennsylvania, should only remain in force during one hundred years; and the latter is said to have sacrificed his life in the attempt to render his decrees immortal.

case, for Lycurgus to suppose that his republic should receive their pay, as soldiers, from those tyrants who were the enemies of Greece? In other respects, should not the great difference between the severity of the discipline at Sparta, and the ease enjoyed at the camp; the insignificance of these kings, in times of peace, and their unlimited consequence during the war, have operated as reasons for involving the republic in difficult and dangerous battles, threatening to terminate in either their destruction, or their slavery? if it be objected to me, that the laws of Lycurgus preserved their force, through a term of more than six hundred years, my reply is, that the neighbours of Sparta were for a very long space of time, ill instructed, and badly governed; nor is this instance more singular than that instance so evident amongst the Iroquois, and several other American nations, who have long existed under the same laws. The really flourishing state of Athens began not till after the close of the Median war, and from this epoch, to the battle of Leuctra, little more than one hundred years are supposed to have elapsed. The Thebans, who imagined that,

by the success of this action, they should have destroyed the Spartans, to all intents, and purposes, had been distinguished at the opening of the former wars of Greece, only, by the contempt which they had drawn upon themselves, in the Median war. The battle of Mantinea, and the universal conquest of Greece, by Philip, and Alexander his successor, may be comprized almost within the space of twenty years; so that the event rather condemns, than justifies the constitution of the Lacedemonians: and here, indeed, the event fell, as it might have been expected to fall, on individuals whose constitution was calculated to startle their nature, but not to convince their understanding. (g)

It is unnecessary to take any great pains, to prove that the government of Athens was corrupt. Every one hath read the works of Demosthenes, and Thucydides; two celebrated

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(g) It may be proper to observe what Polybius (b. 6.) hath remarked concerning the republics of Sparta, and of Rome. He proves, that the laws of Lycurgus were but ill suited to the aggrandizement of the republic, however they might appear to tend, all, to that point; whereas the Romans might have encreased their grandeur, by adhering, merely, to the principles

brated Athenians, who have, with such accuracy, transmitted to us a picture of the manners of their country, and who have equally, excelled; Demosthenes by the force, and Thucydides by the truth of his colourings.

It appears, in general, that the government of Athens was never in any very great repute. What, in fact, signified the senate composed of four hundred persons, and that mixture of Aristocracy, and Democracy, which established distinctions in properties, without reducing them to the standard of their influence over public affairs? for, in the last resource, every thing was referred to a populace, whom they could assemble, and harangue without form, and without precaution.

There will be no occasion to mention the other states of Greece. It is sufficient

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principles of their constitution. Thus, only, can we judge of ancient governments: if, solely, their power, and not the happiness of individuals, became the object of their views, they must be condemned, as often as they appear to have reserved to themselves, a principle, which contradicted the end, which they had intended to accomplish.



to observe that their government was reduced either to a tyrannical oligarchy, or to a tumultuous democracy, each of which degenerated into two factions; the faction of the great, and the faction of the inferior ranks of people; the faction of the populace, and the faction of the opulent.

Were we not apprehensive of anticipating the reflections which we must reserve for the conclusion of the work, it would be no unpleasing task, to rest a little over the comparison of modern republics, to the antient republics. What subjects, for admiration, should we not discover in that wisdom which presides over the federal governments of Switzerland, and of Holland! how must we applaud their permanence, and, particularly, the heroism which founded them! an heroism, at once, calculated to excite interest, and admiration, since it nourishes, and protects the most natural sentiments; the love of our properties, the desire of living with our wives, of educating our children, of cultivating our fields, and of worshipping our God with such a mode of homage, as may be the most pleasing, and the most suitable.

But

But the admirers of antiquity will say : We freely permit you to lead us, from argument to argument, until the Greeks shall have been stripped of those two advantages, the possession of which hath hitherto, particularly, redounded to their reputation : what sophistry, however, can be sufficiently specious to persuade us, that this people excelled not in poetry, eloquence, painting, and architecture ? If you cannot deprive them of the credit of having enjoyed these accomplishments, are you firmly rooted in the belief that they have, not equally excelled in those other particulars, a supposed defect in which hath drawn from you this thoughtless condemnation ?

This argument would, doubtless, carry some weight with it, were it to be judged of, only, at first sight : but it will fall, at once, on the assignment of the reason, why the perfection of the fine arts ought to have preceded, at a considerable distance, the accomplishments of the rational sciences. This object might, of itself, furnish matter sufficient for a dissertation, but, in this place, it is only necessary to observe ; first, that the less instructed the people are, the more  
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the imagination is liable to become poetical; and that, probably, a multitude of barbarous nations have only wanted a fine language, and more celebrity, to have been capable of transmitting to us, poetical compositions, like those of the Greeks: witness the poems in the Erse language, (b) those of the Scandinavians, &c. Secondly that it is exceedingly natural that eloquence should flourish in the midst of a people governed by orators. In fact, this art was so dependant on the particular nature of the government, that it was driven forward to its perfection, at Athens, and absolutely unknown at Sparta. Thirdly, that the excessive superstition of the Greeks, having induced them to build several temples, and to spare no expence in these particulars, the architecture of the out-ward

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(b) Let the philosophical literati solve this problem. Why do the poems in the Erse language breathe the noblest, and sublimest sentiments; the sentiments of love, glory, honour, a veneration of ancestry, patriotism, &c. whereas the sentiments scattered up, and down the Iliad, are base, and vile: such, for instance, are, the desire of plunder, the low ambition of enjoying the best share at a feast, the exasperated violence of passion, transporting itself into acts of barbarous, and cowardly revenge, &c?

ward decorations ought, in course, to have made a great progress amongst them: I say, the architecture of the outward decorations, for it is not perceptible that they have approached to our modern architects, in the workmanship within, which is a proof that their progress, in architecture, was owing to their rage of raising temples. As to sculpture, it is well known that the athletic exercises were, of themselves, sufficient to form able statuaries. Men, destined to appear naked in public, could not avoid an attention to and practice of the finest postures; nor want the faculty of discerning when they were either more, or less graceful. In their public games, where wrestling, the pugilatus, the pancratium, &c. (i) were performed, every attitude was to be studied, and all the combinations of elegance, and strength, particularly marked. What a school was here  
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(i) The pugilatus of the ancients was frequently attended with consequences more fatal, than the consequences arising from the bruising matches, so peculiar to my fellow countrymen. The latter, contented with the exercise of the naked fist, have, in general, not only survived the battle, but preserved their features, and

for painters, and sculptors! the moderns have only faces to inspire art, and, I had almost added, sentiments. Let us, also see what has been done for them. What painters, what resemblances in busts, bracelets, snuff-boxes, &c! Imagine, then, what the Grecian sculptors ought to have been; the sculptors, for whom, the face was only a subordinate, and secondary object.

Now, let the reader pass his judgment: convinced that we are, at once, incapable of admiring too warmly, or censuring too severely, the productions of antiquity, we shall submit to his decisions, without reluctance.

The only favor which we would require at his hands, is, that he would not suppose these

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and their limbs. If the celebrated heroes, Slack and Broughton, had introduced the cestus, in their memorable contest, one combatant, at least, and, probably, each of them, must have died a martyr to the innovation. When this formidable gauntlet was in use, the closing up an eye, or the breaking a jaw-bone were, only, calamities of course: if the Athletæ of old were neither killed at a blow, nor left dying on the sand, it was esteemed a singular instance of great skill, or greater good fortune. The pancratium was a medley of wrestling, and boxing, in which every kind of attempt to get the better, was fair. . K.

these reflections foreign to our undertaking ; but recollect that as the progress of the human mind, in its relation to morality, and politics, was the object of our examination, the fixing our attention upon this celebrated people, became the more important, as it furnished us, at the first glance, with the following melancholy truth : that the progress of the human mind hath, in no shape, redounded to the advantage of the people. How very necessary was it, then, for us, who build all our hopes upon the advancement of reason, and philosophy, to enter into an examination of those facts, which seem so violently to oppose our principles ?

We are not destitute of apprehensions, when we reflect upon the manner in which we have spoken of the Greeks. Our fears not only forbode the displeasure of some eminent literati, whose respect for antiquity may be unlimited ; but the possibility of being taxed with having adopted that modern false glare of wit, to which, the cavils of criticism are better suited, than instruction. We can nevertheless, assert, that if letters and arts had been the only topics in question, we should have rendered ourselves much more  
 liable

liable to have been censured as enthusiasts, than as satyrists. We are, in this place, impatient to declare what we may, perhaps, at some future time, have occasion to repeat: and this is, that we cannot too much wonder at the false road (if the expression be allowable) which we are, daily, pursuing in our studies; quitting the path which would conduct us to the sources of our knowledge, to tread on the path which directs us to a crowd of exceedingly imperfect imitators; the reader must perceive that the preference given to the Latin, in prejudice to the Grecian literature, is, here, alluded to. What time do we not employ in learning a mixed, and half barbarous language, instead of acquiring one so accurate, and so metaphysical; that it may be considered as, of itself, an introduction to all the sciences! how surprized must Cicero be (that Cicero, who not only prosecuted his studies in Greece, but collected an immense library, consisting, entirely, of Greek books) were he to revisit the world, and perceive our youths learning his mother tongue, in preference to the language of his tutors!

## C H A P. IV.

*The condition of humanity amongst the Greeks ;  
its situation in those countries which were  
known during this second epoch.*

**W**ERE we to confine our search to such objects, as might administer comfort to humanity, in its depressed situation, our advances through the different periods of history, would prove useless. Far from perceiving mankind to be enlightened with ideas of their real interests, we observe an universal encrease of confusion, and disorder. Even Egypt, that happy, and renowned country, on which we have fixed our attention, with so much pleasure, became subject to the laws of a stranger, and bore, with  
Asia,



Asia, a share in the misfortune of existing under the most cruel despotism. Greece seems to have been divided into so large a number of different states, for no other reason, than that it might (if the expression be allowable) stretch the surface of war, and calamity; for it is worthy of observation, that the division of sovereignties multiplies disasters through the land. We can, boldly, affirm that each of the little republics of Greece, underwent, during a period of fifty years, several revolutions to which one half of its citizens became the victims; that each, throughout the same space of time, saw its territories ravaged by wars; in short, that no individual of these unhappy towns had run the common course of life, without detesting the hour, in which he had received it. (*k*)

I am not certain that sufficient attention hath been paid to this vice, so inherent in little states. Mr. Rousseau hath remarked, that

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(*k*) Diodorus Siculus (b. 15.) mentions a revolution effected at Argos, in the hundred and second olympiad, when, after several acts of barbarity, perpetrated by each party, the prevailing party ordered twelve hundred citizens to be led to execution.

that wherever the citizens become so numerous, as to render it necessary, that the government should be lodged in a representative body, there can exist no true liberty. (1) I am, nevertheless, of opinion, that there will be no substantial, and lasting liberty, and, in particular, no happiness, but amongst individuals, where every thing is transacted by a representative body. Observe this little republic, where each citizen is, as it were, all, because the state is nothing; where, at one moment, he assumes the gown, and at another, his military armour: a shallow politician, an incapable judge, and an undisciplined soldier; continually, either a prey to faction, or exposed to the rage of war: where as an extensive society, in which every individual is united to each other, by the same interests, and the same laws, derives its peaceful situation from the prudent participation of its labours. In such a society, the soldier is not engaged in pleading the cause of the oppressed; nor is the magistrate employed in defending the ramparts. The labourer, unmolested, pursues the cultivation

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(1) See the social contract.

of his ground, whilst the judge watches over the political welfare of the state, and the warrior repels its invaders: and if the last appear to bear, entirely, the public burden, he is amply indemnified by salaries, and honours. In such a society, peace wears a hundred additional charms, and war throws off a hundred of its horrors. The extent of the domain, and the precautions taken to prevent all access to it, like a centrifugal force, incessantly, drive back the war to the frontiers; and in the same manner, as the interior affairs are transacted by a representative body, a similar body is invested with the power of prolonging, or determining the operations of the war. At the opening of the Peloponnesian war, when Athens wanted to raise such an army, as might withstand the attacks of her enemies, the militia of the city was, of necessity, composed of old men, and boys. All the citizens, including those, before, scattered up and down the lands of Attica, were compelled to confine themselves within the town: and from this circumstance arose that remarkable contagion, to which one half of the people fell a sacrifice. Every place, then, may be said

to have felt, at once, the greatest miseries of war. . . . Whilst France was engaged in the wars of 1733, 1741, and 1757, no more, at any time, than the hundredth part of her inhabitants, were sharers in the danger. Extensive provinces, still, enjoyed the calmest serenity, and even millions of labourers, knew not in what part of the world the armies were engaged.

To these advantages, we may add that sweetness of manners, and those comforts of life, which the people can scarcely retain, but by the means of regular troops; that is to say, those representatives of the nation, who are intrusted with the care of conducting the war. If it be too truly proved, by the experience of all ages, that the greatest misfortune which can happen to a people, is to be subdued, it is certain that an endeavour to acquire a superiority over every neighbouring state can not be too steadily pursued. It is no less evident that this point can never be attained to, but by a military education, so that every citizen, to be a soldier, during one single day of his life, is obliged to embrace the profession of arms, from his birth. Hence, arose the necessity of adopting, in

every age, military manners, alone. What must have been the destiny of men who passed their whole lives, as if every day had been the eve of a battle! the custom of maintaining a standing army, became the sole remedy against this inconvenience. By the means of this arrangement, wherever it shall have become general, the people may be happy, without being enervated, and softened, because a proper discipline is kept up in armies, where the principles of honour and courage may maintain themselves, in a certain degree of accumulation, without which their vigour, and influence, would be but small.*(m)*

We have already seen that despotism had not only driven happiness from the bosom of Asia, but expelled it from a part of Africa: Greece, during her most refined æra, was but a theatre of bloody revolutions. History, then, presents us with no more objects for our reflections, save the Phenicians, and the Carthaginians. The first have been little noticed, except in matters relating to their commerce, and their colonies. There is every  
appear-

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*(m)* Majores nostri bella gesserunt, nostributa dependimus, ne bella patiamur. PAUL. OROS. HIST.

appearance, to confirm us in the opinion, that this active people, equally engaged in the practice, and promotion of industry, conducted themselves on principles, superior to the principles of the Greeks: but their vicinity to the Persians, whilst it, continually, tied them down to an excessively great dependance, prevented them from giving any certain stability to their government.

Whatsoever commendations Aristotle may have lavished upon the laws of the Carthaginians, we cannot believe that a people, whose avarice was so insatiable, whose system of politics was so jealous, and so cruel, and whose religion was so superstitious, and atrocious, could possibly have known true happiness. The imagination starts back, with horror, from those human sacrifices, at the celebration of which, the barbarous mothers threw, with their own hands, their children into the flames. A philosopher, one day, reading that passage in Genesis, wherein it is written, "that God created man in his own image," immediately observed, that man had, with no sparing hand, returned the image to God again. . . . A judgment may, generally, be formed of a people, by their

mode of worship: if it be simple and modest, then are they active, and industrious; if it be full of solemnity and pomp, then are they vain and frivolous; if it be melancholy and austere, then are they fierce, violent, and obstinate.

We shall take no notice of the Scythians, the Indians, and the Chinese, as we have no ground-work, but in conjectures, and fabulous relations. We are, only, sensible that the life which the Scythians led, bore a striking resemblance to the life of the savages. Diodorus Siculus mentions the Indians, with particular approbation, but as he adds the description of an island, which never existed, and other circumstances, of which, some are incredible, and some have been proved false, it is evident that, to make his history appear complete, he was not at all nice in the choice of those materials, of which he has availed himself.

We must, therefore, be contented to conclude this chapter, with a reflection, which, though extremely natural, seems to have been overlooked by the partisans of antiquity. It is, that slavery, alone, was sufficient to render the condition of humanity, in general,  
a hundred





soners, either in battle, or by the Corsairs, were, at length, sold for the benefit of the conquerors. Every one knows how far the rights of the master over his slaves extended. The prostitution of the two sexes was one consequence of that power.<sup>(o)</sup> Let us, for a moment, imagine what must, in our days, be the condition either of an officer, or of a magistrate, who, reduced to the vilest drudgeries, felt the moments of his labour doubly embittered, by perceiving his wife, and children, obliged to sacrifice their persons to the debaucheries of an insolent master. It is scarcely to be supposed, that a person could, now, be found, either brave enough, or base enough to support himself under such a fate. All this, however, frequently happened amongst the antients, and, particularly, amongst the Greeks. I must be permitted to urge the difference between slaves, bought from amongst the individuals of some poor, and half savage nations, and those whom the fortune of war had reduced to this shocking condition: and, with confusion,  
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(o) I cannot recollect the author who hath observed that "impudicitia in ingenuo crimen est, in servo necessitas, in liberto officium."

let it be admitted, that our age is not yet, totally, exempt from the reproaches, which we have thrown upon antiquity. Although we cannot sufficiently lament that adherence to this practice, which avarice, still, maintains amongst the people of the West, and which barbarity, and ignorance have established in the East, yet we must observe; first, that slavery is no longer known, amongst the Christians, except it be in the colonies : secondly, that the slaves are all drawn from an extremely savage, and brutal nation, and that even the natives come to bargain with our traders, for the sale of their own countrymen. Thirdly, that though reason and philosophy proclaim the necessity of treating the slave, like an European, (“*quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses*”) it is notwithstanding true, that the great disparity between these unhappy wretches, and ourselves, is but little calculated to excite in us, the fine feelings of humanity, and serves to nourish those cruel prejudices, which occasion them to remain in a state of oppression. Fourthly, that if these slaves have been treated with a most inexcusable barbarity, experience hath, yet, frequently,

proved

proved that no tenderness, no benefits could erase from the minds of these individuals, their base, ungrateful, and cruel characteristics: that there is every reason to believe that, if even the slaves belonging to the colonies, had been Europeans, they would, already, have intruded themselves into the possession of the rights of citizens, in like manner as the villains of our feudal government, recovered, by little and little, their civil liberty: in short, that the number of slaves, in our time, is much less considerable, since it is limited to the sugar colonies alone, and that amongst more than a hundred millions of Christians, existing at present, we cannot, assuredly, reckon a million of slaves; whereas, that, to a million of Greeks, there were more than three millions of these unfortunate human creatures. (p)

CHAP.

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(p) If the reader be curious to know the sentiments of the ancients, respecting slavery, let him read the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of the politics of Aristotle. He will there find, that "servitude is both just, and unjust, that it is sometimes natural, without being legal, and legal, without being natural; that it is the order of nature, that the least perfect should serve the most perfect; thus, the animals should serve man; and women obey their husbands: that in the  
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CHAP. V.

*Reflections on the Romans.*

IT is to be presumed, that the reader, already informed of the object which we have in view, doth not expect to find in our researches, a scrupulous adherence to chronological order. Having been, once, introduced

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case, where force alone, hath reduced the people to captivity, slavery is just, without being so, in an absolute sense, because, although it be a superiority of virtue, that confirms the authority, it is never in the order of nature, that noble people can be reduced to slavery: but that if there be noble nations, there are other nations on the contrary, ignoble; that amongst the Barbarians, their nobles are only such, as considered, relatively, with their fellow-citizens; whereas there are  
nations

duced amongst the Greeks, it became impossible for us to take leave of them, till we had fixed an eager attention, on those many wonderful particulars, which have attracted the admiration of every age, and whose real value, it was so necessary to estimate, we have ventured to declare, that what seemed fine, was not, on that account, always good; and, considering antiquity, as we have considered the characters exhibited upon its theatre,

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nations which are noble every where." Here is certainly enough to prove in what hands the sacred rights of humanity were, formerly, deposed. But a circumstance still more ridiculous, than barbarous, is, that Aristotle, proposing to take a family, for the model of political societies, discovers that this primitive family is, essentially, composed of three parts, the first of which includes the master, and the slave; as if nature had, in the beginning, formed two beings of different kinds, the one to be the master, and the other to be the slave. It is unnecessary to add, that the other two integral parts of society are, the husband and the wife; and the father, and the children.

The fine, and benevolent sentiment of Alcidas, as preserved in the Scholiast, upon the rhetoric of Aristotle, is a glorious contrast to the latter part of the preceding quotation. Ἐλευθερος ἀφῆκε πάντας θεός; εἰ δέναι δαῖλον ἢ φύσις ποιήσκειν. "God sent all men forth free, nor hath nature made any individual a slave."

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theatre, we have plucked the mask from Agamemnon, to discover the slave, who represented a king of kings. We must, now, resume our labour, and attempt a task at least as difficult as the former.

Whilst the Greeks were busied in the improvement of their laws, the construction of their temples, and the discipline of their armies, Italy fostered in her bosom a people destined to destroy her government, to pull down her buildings, and triumph over her troops.

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The design of nature, and the will of its great author, have been so exceedingly perverted, that to suppose the world could, ever, enjoy a state of universal freedom, might seem the wild suggestion of insanity. Even the cultivation of our colonies, abroad, might have been conducted by the labour of servants, as free as the restraint of salutary laws could permit them to be; and perhaps, it would, on enquiry, be found, that, however impolitic a general enfranchisement of the slaves, in our Eastern and Western Indies, might prove, yet the necessity of a code of laws, to restrain the barbarity of masters, and overseers, should engage the attention of the British legislature. That it will, is exceedingly doubtful. It were natural to imagine that, whilst the patriot, vehemently harangues the senate, in favour of the liberty of an Englishman, he would wish to extend that liberty, if possible, to all his distant dependants: but the living, and the dead, have furnished us with contrary instances. K.

troops. As Demosthenes, his ambition struggling against his nature, disdained to mount the rostrum, until a long and indefatigable practice had convinced him, that his oratory must prove successful; so Rome, whose origin was barbarous, whose beginning was abject, and whose progress was slow, was employed, during four whole ages, in learning the art of conquering, and of governing. Surely, no study hath a stronger claim to the attention of the philosopher, than that study which endeavours to investigate the principles, which could raise a simple city, to such a height; or, to speak more properly, to that excess of glory, and prosperity: But known events are not, always, in proportion to known causes; and it frequently happens that political writers imitate the ancient astronomers, who, tolerably well, described, and even announced, the particular phænomena, but imputed them to absurd causes. Yet, were it certain, that we had discovered the real sources of the Roman grandeur, of what advantage could such an acquisition be to us, who wish not to know in what manner a state is aggrandized; but, merely, whether by being rendered  
great

## PUBLIC HAPPINESS. III

great it is become more happy. Such a discovery would be, in our eyes, no better than a large, magnificent road, which could not conduct us to the place, whither we desire to go.

If the Roman government can be said to merit the approbation of posterity, it is not, because its individuals, confined within the circumference of their city, either made a preparation to defend it, or formed their systems of civil policy : but it is, certainly, because Rome, beginning to rule in Italy, at length reduced those fine countries to a submission to her principles, and her discipline, at least, if not to her laws : it is, because, having extended her influence over all the Mediterranean, she added Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain to her empire ; and, chiefly, it is because that in the moment, when she became the mistress of Africa, she arrived at the privilege of giving laws to Asia. Now, if, in these ostentatious æras, mankind were more free, and unmolested ; if tyranny was abolished ; if the rights of peace were more sacred, and the laws of war more humane ; if the fields were better cultivated, and if commerce multiplied the links, in the great political



political chain, which united nations to each other; then, let us assent to the admiration of every past age, nor cease to study the form of government, peculiar to a people, who, beginning to labour at the acquisition of their own happiness, perceived themselves by the sole perfection of their public administration, and the single energy attached to their constitution, in a condition to prescribe laws to barbarism, to hold ambition in chains, and, in short, to teach the rest of the universe, to whom they had been, at once, the benefactors, and the models to aspire to an assimilation with themselves. But, if nothing like this hath happened; if the Romans, far from triumphing by the ascendancy of their virtue, were indebted for their prevalence, solely, to crimes, and entirely established themselves upon the ruins of the world, who shall hinder us from loading them with censures, as severe as those, which we have passed upon the Greeks; the Greeks, who were as brave, as heroic, and more amiable than the Romans?

Perhaps, we have, at length, found an opportunity of being reconciled even to the admirers of Greece; for the learned world is  
divided

divided into two parties, one of which consists of advocates for the Greeks, and the other, of advocates for the Romans. It must, in general, be confessed that the opinion of these last appears to be the too hasty fruit of erudition, or rather, the first production of an imperfect study. The modern ages have been, indeed, sufficiently singular, whilst they contented themselves with proposing, as models, those, who were, in every department, slow and feeble imitators; but, by an astonishing caprice, it hath fallen out, that the more profusely Rome in her glory hath been laden with esteem, and veneration, the more have her encomiasts been constrained to disparage her original condition. Plutarch was the first writer, who maintained that the founders of this queen of the world, were only robbers, and outlaws. This idea hath been eagerly embraced by certain systematical literati, (q) who being persuaded that

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(q) Giam-Baptista Vico hath endeavoured to support this opinion, in a work entitled "principi di scienza nuova intorno alla commune nature delle nazioni." This was followed by a similar publication from Mr. Duni, ("Origine, e progressi del cittadino, e del

the Roman government had no mixture of democracy; in the infancy of its constitution, have imagined it impossible to represent the subjects of Romulus, in too disgraceful a light. They, confidently, assert that this new-born colony was peopled, solely, by vagabonds, and individuals disowned by all; that from amongst these, their legislator chose the most eminent, that is to say, such as were originally,

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e del governo, civile di Roma,") whose sentiments are adopted by Mr. l'Abbé Bignon, in his "histoire critique du gouvernement Romain." Although we do not think ourselves obliged to admit the principles of these authors, in their utmost latitude, yet we cannot mention the learning, and penetration, which they have discovered in their writings, without the highest applause. We would, in this place, willingly, attempt to give the reader an idea of those reasons, which they have advanced, in support of their argument; but were it even possible for us to undertake this task, without wandering too far from our subject, we should, notwithstanding, be of opinion, that it would be better to recommend a thorough perusal of their works, the matter of which would make ample reparation for the pains of having examined it. It will suffice, then, to observe, that the argument from whence our authors draw the greatest advantage, is, the difference which the privilege of taking the auguries, established amongst the citizens. Mr. Duni has fully proved, that only the auguries could constitute

originally, free men, (ingenuos) and whose fathers were known; that it was from these, that he selected the senators, and with the senators, only; that he divided the authority; and that the people (Plebs) or in other words, the commons, were, only, composed of clients, or bondmen attached to their chiefs; or else, of a troop of fugitives, whom the protection offered by Romulus, had collected together.

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tute a marriage in that form, which the Romans called nuptiæ; whilst the union of persons of different sexes was, amongst the Plebeians, nothing but a kind of cohabitation, understood by the word, connubium. All these observations are just, and ingenious; but the great error lies in their having been perverted. As to the Plebeians not marrying, in the face of the church, does it, therefore, follow that their marriages, their successions, and their inheritances, were no more regulated than those of the Negroes, belonging to our colonies, are, at present? does it, also, follow that the people had no share in the government? if, on the contrary, it be certain, that the Plebeian families, like those of the Patricians, perpetuated themselves by inheritance; if the rewards acquired by services in war; if distinctions, names, and properties were preserved from race to race, then did not the people, however deprived of the privilege of taking the auguries, form a body politic, and a part of the republic? besides,

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If Livy, and Dionysius Halicarnassius, should prove equally full in their evidence against this paradox, our learned authors would not scruple to reject their testimony. *“ These writers have pretended, to assert what they were ignorant of. A profound night covered*

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it doth not appear that the free Romans, at any time, married slaves : and if the simple connubium had been so abject, and so brutal an union of the two sexes, how could the Patricians have submitted to an intermarriage with mere Plebeians? it is, nevertheless, certain that these marriages were customary, previous to the law of the twelve tables, and since it is not evident that this usage was, at that time, forbidden, as being a recent innovation, there is every reason to suppose that it existed, even before the people had tribunes, that is, when their condition was the most abject, and unfortunate.

It appears, then, that our authors, with all their abilities, and intelligence, were deceived, by extending their principles too far. In this respect, they are, certainly, very excusable. There would be but little erudition amongst the men of genius, if a taste for paradoxes were not, sometimes, to come to their assistance. The writer of imagination suffers himself to be captivated by an idea : he seizes on it with ardour, and having once pierced into it, employs all his talents to support it : he reads, examines, and compiles ; how much must learning be obliged to him, when, thus, made the instrument of freeing him from the yoke of pedantry !

*vered the first ages of Rome, and it is rashness to attempt to penetrate through its obscurity:*" and yet our modern critics, have found no difficulty in effecting, what these two celebrated antients could not accomplish. It is a fact, that in spite of their having excepted against their depositions, they condescended to avail themselves of them, whensoever they appeared to suit their purposes. For example, after a peremptory condemnation of the opinions, given by Dionysius, relative to the Roman government, they, nevertheless, confidently present us with citations, taken from passages, in those numerous harangues, with which that author thought proper to adorn his works; as if what he had, visibly, invented, could have had any weight, when thrown into the scale, against what he related, and as if he had not known, much better than another, the consequences of these pretended contradictions. As we do not perceive ourselves concerned in this discussion, we shall, therefore, rest contented with making the following observations.

First, supposing it to be even certain, that history hath not transmitted to us, any authentic traditions, respecting the first ages of

Rome, this circumstance would, then, furnish the moderns with a pretext for believing, that they could advance better reasons, and conjectures, towards the elucidation of this subject, than the Romans themselves have ever given. (r)

Secondly, were it, as some have ingeniously insinuated, a fact, that historians have been more scrupulous in their detail of events, in proportion to the distance of those ages, the transactions of which they wrote, it would not follow, from thence, that they deserved less confidence than their predecessors; for the art of criticism and investigation is peculiar to enlightened æras; nor is it the prospective glass, but the illuminating torch, which

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(r) It is exceedingly to be lamented that the accounts of the establishment of nations, of all other accounts in the historical department, the most interesting, and the most instructive, should be so universally defective. A want of authentic memorials is not peculiar to the first ages of Rome. The annals of Britain are, perhaps, equally involved in obscurity, and equally wrapped in fables. The improbability that the two first kings of Rome should have been, accidentally, called by names, allusive to their future actions, hath often been remarked. Every one knows that the words Romulus, and Rome, are taken from a Greek expression, signifying force; and that the name, Numa, is derived from the same language, and means law. K.

which is so necessary to the study of history. Who, for instance, can doubt, that the present times possess a more competent knowledge of the reigns of the first race of our kings, than those times in which Froesart existed? Who, also, can doubt that Dionysius Halicarnassius had, after twenty years of assiduous labour, conceived better notions of the Roman history than Fabius Pictor.

Thirdly, all the historians, and all traditions inform us, that Romulus conducted to Rome, a colony of Albans: now, we have not the least proof, that the people of Alba stood, at any time, in that disgraceful light, in which the Romans of that age, were painted. On the contrary, if conjectures may be admitted, there is every reason to believe that this people became established under Amulius, because every monarch, desirous of being absolute, rather protects the people, than the great.

Fourthly, antiquity furnishes us with many examples of the prodigious difference, which subsisted between the freeman,<sup>(s)</sup> and the

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slave ;

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<sup>(s)</sup> Dionysius Halicarnassius observes, that Servius Tullius shared the conquered lands amongst the citizens, who,



slave; but it produces no instance of that middle order, that race of bondmen, intended to have been brought to Rome, in the retinue of the Patricians. Every slave had a master, and his only abode was the house, to which he belonged. He could not, therefore, form, with others, a class apart, however abject that class might be supposed to be.

Fifthly, the Sabines having united themselves to the Romans, by a free covenant,  
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who, having nothing belonging to them, were obliged to work with their own hands; so that, after this disposition, the individuals amongst the Romans, consisted only of proprietaries, and slaves. Now the same author, willing to justify Servius Tullius, for having made a great number of these last free, enters into a long detail, that he may inform us, under what predicament the slaves stood amongst the Romans. He remarks, that they were all composed, either of such as were made prisoners in war; those sold towards the increase of the public revenue; or, even, the slaves of the enemy, who always made a part of the plunder: from hence, result two important circumstances: first, that, amongst the Romans, war was the sole source of slavery; and next, that that race which consisted of the vassals, and dependants of the great, (as described by some authors) never existed at Rome. There are, also, other passages so decisive, that one would wonder at their

and formed, as it were, an identical part of the people, it is to be presumed that the condition of the Roman populace was not either more base, or more unfortunate than that condition under which they existed in their original country ; since they did not stipulate for the enjoyment of any privilege, or distinction : and in this, they were imitated by the people of Alba, who, joining themselves to the Romans, though, indeed, less willingly than the others, yet never remonstrated against that abject situation into which they must

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their having escaped the attention of our critics. Such is that of Livy, who, relating the tumults, which preceded the retreat of the people, to the sacred mount, expresses himself thus : *Civitas secum ipsa discors intestino inter Patres, Plebemque flagrabat odio*... and a little farther on ; “ *magno natu quidam cum omnium majorum suorum insignibus se in forum projecit.*” Now, what could this citizen of great birth, who shewed the wounds which he had received in combat, and the blows by which he had been bruised, in his state of slavery amongst the Patricians ; whose misfortunes not only interested all the people in his favour, but made them take arms against the great, possibly be, but a Plebeian ? Thus, about the two hundredth and sixtieth year from the foundation of Rome, there was a Plebeian, whom Livy, the violent Partizan of aristocracy, distinguished as a man of elevated birth.

must (were some authors to be credited) have, certainly, been thrown.

Sixthly, all writers not only agree in acknowledging, that the people enjoyed the privilege of electing kings, creating magistrates, enacting laws, and determining either on peace, or war; but Dionysius Halicarnassius, still more positively asserts, that when Horatius had stabbed his sister, the power of passing judgment on this atrocious crime was referred to the people.

Here, is matter sufficient to convince us, how reasonably the Roman government was, hitherto, supposed to have been intermixed with monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Now, what claim hath this complicated, this modified government to our esteem? doth it furnish us with any constitutional plan? In fine, what was it, in its first principles? let us not scruple to call it a simple polity, the interior arrangement of a city. I intreat the reader to pay some attention to these words; in my opinion, they not only contain a new idea, but cast a great light upon the system of politics.

Upon

Upon the system of politics!<sup>(t)</sup> the expression which hath just dropped from my pen, may serve to prove the truth of what I am going to unfold. It is that all the governments of antiquity, except the great antient monarchies, the origin of which we are ignorant of, owe their birth to a town, to a city. A little reflection would convince us, that it could not have been otherwise. In fact, men were not known under the name of a people, but when they equally enjoyed the same laws, adhered to general customs, and felt those mutual dependancies, which united them, and, as it were, attested their identity. Now, mankind stood in no need of laws, and conventions, except when great numbers were assembled in a small space. The more individuals are disseminated over the surface of the earth, the more are they occupied in procuring their subsistence, either by the chase, or the cultivation of the ground; the less, also, do they want a legislation. On the other hand, the more they are united, the more the circumstances which draw them

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(t) Πολιτικη, regendæ civitatis scientia, from πολις, a city.

to each other, are multiplied; and the more are they constrained to have recourse to treaties, and conventions. The result, therefore, is that the first want of every society, must have been the want of a polity; and that all governments began by being no more than a simple polity. In this instance it, particularly, appears that language serves to explain facts, and not, that facts serve to explain the language. Πολιτεία, amongst the Greeks, and civitas, amongst the Romans, signified, originally, only the government of a city, although they were, afterwards, supposed to mean every thing, which appertained to an administration, in general: and, in the present times, by the word, polity, may be understood, the government of men, in opposition to the term, administration, which, rather, signifies the government of properties.

It will, perhaps, be objected to me, that war is the first source of authority, and consequently, of government; to which I shall answer, that supposing the war to have been long, and the army numerous, the government of this army must still have appertained to a polity; and that if the war had been speedily concluded, a quiet society, and the  
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possibility that men might live together without being molested, would have proved the first object of the conqueror, and the first fruits of peace. In these two cases, a polity would have been established, either in the camp, or in a newly-rising city. Were these considerations to be extended to the animal creation, it would, in like manner, appear, that the society of wild beasts, which, independent upon each other, easily procure their subsistence, is the most imperfect society of all; and that the finest examples of a regular polity, discernible in the works of nature, are found amidst the hillocks of ants, and the hives of bees. Every thing, therefore, concurs to prove that the first conventions were made for a multitude, and that they were confined, as it were, to the laws of juxtaposition.

Far from supposing that it is necessary, still more extensively, to unfold these truths, we apprehend that they would appear too simple and trivial, if we did not press forward towards a demonstration of their importance, and fix the attention on those contradictions, which reign amidst the first principles of all

government, and the ends which all government should have in view.

What, in fact, are human creatures, upon the earth? They are children at the breast, obliged to press the bosom, from which they must receive their nourishment. What are human creatures in cities? They are transplanted plants; improvident, and uncertain beings; and like that multitude of microscopic animals, which fluctuating from side to side, and, incessantly, precipitating themselves upon each other, seem to have been created, only, that they might preserve themselves in motion.

Let it not be doubted that agriculture should be the first object of legislators, and property, the leading principle of agriculture. Nature granting nothing but to reiterated solicitations, her first benefits were bought, and the first expences, whether of money, or labour, ought to have established the first right of property. The perfection of cultivation would not have failed to have introduced plenty, and variety of productions, from whence must have arisen commerce, and from commerce, must have proceeded riches. Then, the necessity of public markets,  
and

and the convenience, resulting from places situated by the banks of rivers, or by the shore of the sea, must have given rise to cities : but these, regarded as the last product, or the simple consequence of an agrarian government, must have received from it, their manners, and their laws. Such peaceable cultivators could not, possibly, have neglected an establishment of the full influence of their salutary principles. These men, attached, by interest and habit, to the soil, would have made their own preservation the basis of their politics; and, perhaps, the word glory, would not have been known in any language; but the contrary to this hath been the case.

Whether the first inhabitants of the earth, perceived themselves placed by nature, in those advantageous situations, where her gifts were more abundant, and less necessary; whether force, possessing, from the beginning, more means of exerting itself, soon, knew the method of prevailing over labour; or, whether the progress of population hath been, always, more rapid, than the progress of industry; we cannot discover that states have been indebted for their origin to cultivators;

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on the contrary, they seem to have been founded by robbers, and vagabonds ; hence, it hath happened, that cities were the first rudiments of nations ; and that the political government hath served as the chief principle in the constitution of states.

This we have already observed : the origin of antient monarchies is unknown to us ; but, let us, without searching, with an useless attention, into the obscurity of the times, dwell, for a moment, on the progress of population, in that part of the world, which during so long a period gave either laws or examples to the whole earth.

Whether, or no, Danaus, Pelasgus, Inachus, and Pelops were the first founders of the Grecian cities, it is, nevertheless, certain that Greece was peopled by colonies, which came from Asia, or from Egypt ; and it is equally true, that all the great cities of Greece, and Sicily, issued from Sparta, Athens, Corinth, Argos, &c. Now, if the progress of this population be traced, as many republics, as cities, will appear to have arisen from it. And, if ever any of these establishments became united, and seemed to form a political system, it was effected

fectcd by a simple federal union, like the union of the Amphictyons, the Etruscans, and the people of Latium. On the other hand, if these rich mines of the human species, if these vast oriental monarchies, sunk under the efforts of the newly-rising republics, what could have remained upon the earth, except the vestiges of that single government, which the conquerors obeyed? Corinth gave birth to Syracuse; Tyre to Carthage; Troy to Alba; and Alba to Rome. To these famous names, add the names of Sparta, and of Athens, and you will have enumerated the principal actors on the great theatre of the world.

Let the respectable philosophers, who labour to disengage mankind from such frivolous amusements, such idle speculations, and attach them to those two important objects, their subsistence, and their happiness, no longer wonder if the plan of a government, founded upon agriculture, and territorial property, should prove an absolutely new idea, existing only in opinion, or on paper. Would they account for our ignorance of so interesting a matter, let them recollect those innumerable errors, which were committed by that political system of government, which

became the irreconcilable enemy of property. They will, there, perceive perpetual convulsions, censures, reformations, divisions of land, distributions of corn, arbitrary taxes, and, in short, all property hazarded in every one of these political quarrels. They will, then, easily observe, that at all times, when alterations in the constitution of the state, and the fortunes of individuals, were, necessarily, involved together, quarrels, and seditions grew more frequent; and that, on the contrary, whilst factions mutually disputed concerning their privileges, and dignities, it was much easier to appease them, than if they had, at the same time, attacked the properties of each other.

If a municipal administration, and simple forms of polity, had constituted the first governments of every state, there could, certainly, be no reason to expect that its origin should account for its progress. Thus, it would be needless to seek, in the infancy of states, the seeds of their future grandeur; and particularly, to amuse ourselves with the vain hopes of finding upon some little hill, surrounded by walls, the principles of an universal monarchy.

A young

A young, ambitious man, fatigued with waiting till he might succeed his grand-father, and, perhaps, apprehensive that his legitimacy might be disputed, proposes to found a new establishment. He, easily obtains assistance, and even succeeds in the art of enticing away some of his countrymen. A convenient spot is chosen, contiguous to which, dwellings are built; that the inhabitants may be nearer at hand, in cases of mutual assistance; the circumference is drawn, and surrounded by ramparts, and ditches. Scarcely is this establishment formed, but an attention is paid to the interior arrangements: it is not possible for the founder, whose associates were collected together, solely, by the hopes of liberty and equality, to rise, all at once, into the rank of masters; yet, at the same time, the leading part which he took in the plan, and the execution of it, gives him a particular pre-eminence, and constitutes him the chief of this rising state. The fathers of families, and the most responsible men, compose a council, whose province is the discussion of every subject; but the decision of the most important subjects is submitted to the general assembly of all the

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colonists.

colonists. They, soon, turn their thoughts towards putting themselves in a state of defence, and, even, concert measures whereby they might be enabled to attack their neighbours. The new inhabitants are divided into different bodies; companies of foot, and troops of horse are formed, and this city militia serves as the model to their army. The desire of acquiring additional forces, prevents them from being over-scrupulous in their reception of recruits. An asylum is opened to all adventurers, and, especially to fugitive slaves: such a circumstance was, then, of the utmost importance, and promised to be the source of an extensive population: But as this admission of strangers, of all denominations, introduced colonists, solely of one sex, a project is conceived, highly expressive of the morals of such citizens. The women, belonging to the neighbouring state, are carried off, in defiance of all the laws of hospitality. To recover them, the insulted people betake themselves to arms: In the very moment, whilst they are prosecuting their revenge, they suffer themselves to be disarmed; the two nations are united by a treaty, solemnly confirmed.

confirmed, and (what is still more extraordinary) religiously observed. The city encreases, and its polity becomes more perfect. A king, acting in the character of a law-giver, succeeds a warlike prince; he, also, in his turn, gives place to military monarchs. The nation grows warlike, but is surrounded by states of the same character, and every decisive advantage which it gains, seems, entirely, owing to the conduct of its chiefs: Such an advantage depends on fortune, and cannot, yet, be the effect of the political constitution, &c. &c.

Thus far, the consideration of the progress of the Roman republic, would be to little purpose. I know but of two causes, which may be assigned: the one is due to chance, which will, constantly, have great weight in all human affairs and these instances of chance, are, the capacities of the kings, and the length of their reigns: the other cause belongs more to polity, and is that principle of population, established by Romulus, and adopted by his successors; a principle which induced the Romans to institute a law, enacting, that the vanquished, instead of being reduced to captivity (at that time the custom)

should be all transported to their city. This is the real source of the greatness of Rome. It was this, which, in the space of two hundred and fifty years, after its foundation, occasioned the number of its inhabitants to mount up to one hundred and thirty thousand citizens.<sup>(u)</sup> As to its government, what idea can we conceive of that, when we perceive the people base enough to groan so long, and patiently, beneath the yoke of such a tyrant as Tarquinius Superbus? Indeed, if the Roman youth had not been wearied out by a toilsome, and protracted war; and if a most horrid tragedy had not happened, opportunely, to rouse the spirit of the people, Rome must have become, what Syracuse was, the sport of tyrants, and the theatre of revolutions.

But their kings were expelled, and liberty sat in their places... Liberty!... what liberty? Tyranny did but exchange hands, passing from kings to the great. The people bewail their earliest captivity; they complain, and are not heard; reduced, at length, to an  
excess

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(u) Or, according to the calculation of Dionysius Halicarnassius, one hundred, and forty thousand souls.

excess of despair, in the violence of their woes, alone, they find the courage necessary to make them terminate. The establishment of the office of Tribune confirms the effect of the Valerian law. The people receive new life; and scarcely have they ceased from fearing, before they become formidable. Here, the complexion of the times undergoes an universal change; and the history of the Roman government is, from henceforth, a detail of the progress of Democracy. The Plebeians are, by marriages, confounded with the nobles, and Rome, practically democratical, is no longer aristocratical, except in speculation; for it is remarkable that the Roman polity was never proportioned to the constitution of the government; so that the people, when stripped of their privileges, preserved their influence, by the terror which they inspired, and the nobility, when deprived of their original rights, were indebted, for their consequence, to popular respect. (w)

I would, now, ask these subtle politicians, who see every thing in Rome, as Malle-

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(w) During the second Punic war, most of the dignities were held by the Patricians.



branche saw every thing in God, what æra, what moment of this perpetual fluctuation, they would seize on, to take from the Roman government, a pattern, which every other nation ought to follow? They may, perhaps, be somewhat embarrassed by this question, and yet, they may contrive to elude it. This will be their answer. “ We allow that the constitution of the Roman republic never had any properly fixed principles; but you cannot deny that its polity enjoyed, at least, an equal advantage. That spirit of discipline, that perfection in the art of war, that system, to which power, and encreasing grandeur were attached, sufficiently plead in favour of the principal springs in the machine of government. Such great effects, must have proceeded from powerful causes.”

Here, I must beg to be indulged with the insinuation of a doubt, the temerity of advancing which (if doubting can be temerity) I shall not endeavour to conceal. The Romans, indeed, as their own historians affirm, triumphed over their neighbours, almost as frequently as they fought; but to form a judgment concerning these great advantages,

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let us recollect that they waged war, during a space of time, nearly approaching to four hundred years, ere they reduced to submission, the single city of Veü:(\*) and let us wait, before we estimate this superiority of the Romans, until we shall have read, in the works of the historians of the Volscians, the Æqui, the Samnites, and the Etruscans, the same facts which Livy hath related : yet even this, is unnecessary : for that very author, somewhere, confesses, that, for a long space of time, the Volsci were, at least, as successful as the Romans. We will not, in this place, call forth the too well known histories of Porfenna, Coriolanus, and Brennus, the Gaul; but shall rest contented with remarking that if Horatius Cocles had, unfortunately; fallen, when he received the wound on his knee; if the mother of Coriolanus had died, some years sooner; and if Manlius Capitolinus had slept one quarter of an hour more,

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(\*) It appears that, after a siege of ten years, the Romans accomplished their reduction, solely, by the error, which this city committed, in choosing a king, and abandoning her alliance with the Latins; a defection which they could never forgive.

the mistress of the world had been entirely overthrown.

I cannot avoid fixing the attention of the reader, for a moment, upon this object. Let him judge, with me, how frivolous the common place observations, so frequently repeated, by those authors, who have written concerning the Romans, must, unavoidably, prove. What is more common than to find it asserted, that the spirit of conquest was the soul of their government? The spirit of conquest, amongst men who suffered three hundred and sixty years to roll away, without bethinking themselves of attempting a siege! the spirit of conquest, amongst a people, whose wars were only wars of reprisals, or of plunder! the spirit of conquest, amongst individuals, who never imagined that, to subdue their enemies, they should have seized their military fortresses! We need not quit the streets of Rome, to discover the secret springs in their machine of government: let us direct our researches, solely, into the dissensions betwixt the people, and the great; these dissensions constitute the sources of all those events which excite our surprize. At first, the great dreading the  
people,

people, when animated by their Tribunes, conceived the expedient of sending them to war: but as the soldiers were obliged to furnish themselves with subsistence, at their own expence, it was not convenient to make long campaigns. It was, therefore, only for a time that they were diverted by war, from an attention to public affairs, and, that time being elapsed, they returned from battle, more burdened, and more mutinous, than they had ever been. A project was, then, concerted to prolong the war, and to lay sieges. To effect this, it became necessary to adopt the resolution of giving pay to the troops. The Patricians entered, heartily, into the sacrifice of their contingent, and sent it, of their own accord, to the public treasury: But the Tribunes were not so easily duped. They tore the mask off from this false generosity, and exposed the snare, concealed under this apparent beneficence.

What is the result of all this? it is, that it occasions, in our opinion, a reaction of effects upon causes, and of causes upon effects: that is, for instance, we are induced to judge of the constitution of a government, from some splendid circumstances, which excite our

our respect; and, on the other hand, full of this idea, we place most of the events, in the same point of view, from which we beheld the principal events. Now, I consider human reason, as armed with two instruments, and these are contemplation,(y) and experiment. These, only, can enable it to pierce through the chaos of opinions, in search of truth; but if, instead of perfecting them, it were to hurry on, through the concurrent use of each, the consequence must be, that, clashing incessantly, the one against the other, they would be impaired, before they could assist it.

It is astonishing, that mankind should have been almost constantly mistaken in the use of these two instruments. The physical system hath been submitted to contemplation, and the political system to experiment. The laws of nature have been founded on ingenious, but extravagant conjectures; the laws of society have been founded on particular facts. The cruelties of a tyrant occasioned the extirpation of monarchy; an unfortunate success, an error of councils, effected the dismissal  
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(y). Theory, which is derived from the Greek word θεωρία, signifies, only, contemplation.

of democracy ; an abuse, either of power, or of riches, threw a discredit over aristocracy ; a crime committed on the person of a female, exceedingly beloved, established a violent severity in the infliction of punishments ; a reprisal, dictated by passion, fixed the rights of war. Thus, men, guessing at the events of future days, by the circumstances which had arisen in the course of the preceding days, have blunted the instrument of experiment, and, entirely, abandoned the instrument of meditation.

How different should have been the path, marked out for the exertion, and progress of the human understanding ! astronomy, Physics, and natural history, have, as it were, been lavish of those given problems, which they have presented, for our discussion. All that remained for us, was to adjust the equation, to arrange, and to number ; a second study, then, courted our researches, and that was Zoology, or the knowledge of living creatures, either in their kinds, or separately, the which study conducted us to the philosophy of physics, that is, the art of preserving mankind, in the most perfect state of welfare, possibly attainable, by equally

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employing physical, and moral means: I say, moral means, for who doubts whether, or no, morality be a branch of physics? Here the quantity of facts was immense, but the inconvenience arising from variety counterballanced the advantage, resulting from multiplicity. In this case, experiment must have been attended with timidity, and whilst expectation was involved in doubts, the practice, or the science thrown into action, could not have been employed, except with much reserve. To these studies, naturally succeeded the studies of government, that is, of political bodies; of those organized aggregations, which under the name of empires, or republics, present to us a new order of moral beings. Now, who doth not, at the first sight, perceive that these political bodies, in number extremely small, and full of varieties, or anomalies, are, of all the objects of our researches, those objects which, more than any others, elude the light of experiment?

From these reflections, which we do but just hint to the reader, a new system of science, hitherto unknown, seems, all at once, to spring up. The examination of nature,  
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and of her fixed, immutable, and necessary laws, should be the first foundation of all knowledge, the *initium sapientiæ*. From these primary notions of nature, one might proceed to her principal productions, and, at length, to her circumscribed, and individuated operations. *Andrologia*, or the knowledge of man in general, would serve as the basis to medicine, natural history, and morality; and these would give birth to politics, which would prove but the result of all the others. It is, then, that an absolute *Physiocratia* would arise, a government founded on the powers of nature, and the energy of her action.

In a less enlightened age, and at a period, when the human mind might not be so much accustomed, as it is at present, to the most substantial nourishment, it would be necessary to apologize for this philosophical digression, and, particularly, for that concise, and abstracted form, into which I have thrown these reflections: but I am not ignorant, that knowledge is, in our days, become so diffusive, that authors can, scarcely, make any other pretensions to a superiority over their readers, except those pretensions which  
 may



may have arisen from the labour of having meditated, longer than them, upon the subjects concerning which they may have written. I, even, perceive that nothing can be more grateful to the composer of a work than to imagine himself placed near a man of genius, who, rapidly, seizes all his thoughts, whose attention animates him, whose looks encourage him, and at whose side he finds fresh vigour imparted to his abilities, and additional certainty infused into his conceptions. In this confidence, I flatter myself, that I may dispense with expatiating on the result of what hath been advanced; and proving farther, that, on the one hand, the principles of polity, adopted by mankind, have never rested upon a solid basis; and that, on the other hand, it is very necessary that there should be a sufficient number of facts, attendant on this science, to reduce it to experiment, or, in other words, to the doctrine of example.

To return to the Romans: it may be proper to recollect what hath been already observed, concerning that error, which leads us to judge of facts, rather according to our anterior prepossessions, than by an examination of those facts, as within themselves. We shall,

shall, then, quickly perceive to what extremes the vanity of the Romans, the adulation of the Greeks, and the enthusiastic admiration of posterity, have stretched themselves, to give a kind of bold, and singular relief to the infancy of the republic. Thus, when Servius Tullius had been elevated from a state of slavery, to the royal dignity, it was asserted, that a celestial flame had formerly been observed to descend upon his cradle.

This disposition appears no where, so striking, as in the opinion conceived of, the Roman art of war. Not contented with having bestowed on it the applause which it deserves, its encomiasts would fain persuade us to forget that it did not reach its last degree of perfection, till the time of the Scipios: and they would willingly call, that military knowledge, which the Romans derived at length, solely, from the frequency of misconduct and bad success, the necessary consequence arising from the wisdom of their government. (z)

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(z) As I am precluded, by the subject of this work, from entering into a long detail, concerning the  
Roman

I am astonished that no person hath, as yet, been induced to compare the quantity of battles, which Livy makes the Romans gain, with the small number of real successes, which they acquired, during the space of four hundred

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Roman art of war, I shall only produce one, from amongst the many errors committed, on these occasions.

Because it hath been observed, that the Romans, towards the time of the Punic wars, formed themselves into such a disposition of battle, as to have occasioned the ranging of the infantry, in chequers, or squares, consisting of three files, with the cavalry, on the wings; it was, therefore, imagined that they, always, drew up their army in this order. I am, however, enabled to prove, that, during the four first ages of the republic, the cavalry was constantly stationed, as a body of reserve. From amidst a multitude of facts, tending to confirm this opinion, I shall rest contented with a selection of these facts which follow. Livy, mentioning a great battle, between Fabius and the Samnites, asserts, that this consul ordered his cavalry to charge, but that they threw their own troops, and the forces of the enemy, into equal disorder. *Equites ducibus tribunis antè signa evecti, haud multò plus hostibus, quam suis præbuerunt tumultus.* Now, these equites ante signa evecti, who occasioned so much confusion amongst their own infantry, and the infantry of the enemy, could, surely, be no other, than a body of reserve, rushing on to the charge, through the intervals of their  
foot.

hundred years. I am still more surprized, that no doubt is entertained concerning the authenticity of the history, when the historian is observed to be so very exact, as never to omit the detail of a single action: there are sufficient opportunities of comparing this

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foot. I omit the description of a number of battles, during which the consul is supposed to have ordered his cavalry to fall back into the rear, in order to charge the enemy, in flank; a kind of attack, which must have proved unavoidable, in the very beginning of the action, had the cavalry been stationed on the wings; and which, also, could never have been executed, if the cavalry of the enemy, had observed the same disposition: but let me remark that the four hundredth, and fortieth year, from the foundation of Rome, is the period, at which Livy fixes the first introduction of this disposition of battle, so often practised afterwards. Treating of the Samnites, his words are: *Itaque in aciem procedunt, equitibus in cornua divisis.* Doth not the particular attention with which the author describes this disposition, sufficiently prove that, it was, hitherto, almost without a precedent? The following passage informs us, that the infantry did not march on to the attack, in chequers, or squares; and is an additional confirmation of the opinion, which we have advanced, insinuating that the cavalry was stationed, as a body of reserve. The dictator, Marcus Valerius, coming up to the assistance of an advanced guard, marched in the following order. *Prima incedebant signa*

scrupulous attention, with the attention employed in transmitting to us all the harangues; and of remarking, in particular, a certain uniformity in the descriptions, which gives the intelligent reader occasion to suspect, that

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*signa legionum, ne quid occultum, aut repentinum hostis timeret, sed reliquerat intervalla inter ordines pedum, quâ satis laxo spatio, equi permitti possent.* By this, it may be perceived that on the one hand, the legion did not, constantly, leave intervals, for then the historian would have been satisfied, with saying, that they had been augmented: and that on the other hand, the cavalry was not stationed at the wings; for had that been the case, in this particular instance, so new a disposition would have excited the attention of the enemy, and have taught them to expect a rapid, and unexpected assault, (*quid repentinum*) what astonishes me the most, is, that no person hath been led to make these observations by a conviction, that they were absolutely necessary, to effect an explanation of certain passages, which must, without it, have appeared absurd. It hath been observed that the Roman cavalry sometimes attacked the enemy in flank, and, at other times, in the rear; and thus gained a decisive victory: they, sometimes, also, alighted, to renew the fight, on foot. Now, it is ridiculous to assert, that the Romans, having no skill in horsemanship, frequently gave the preference to an attack on foot, because it is well known, that the decision of the battle was, often, owing to their having charged on horseback. The fact, then, was simply this. When the enemy had kept their  
flanks

that the variety of the different orders of battle, was confined to the tactics of the author, and not to the possibilities of war. What! after so many battles gained, by the left, the right, and the center divisions;

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after

flanks too close, to apprehend their being broken into, and when the first attack of their infantry had made the Roman foot give way, the consuls, perceiving that they had neither time, nor opportunity, to make a diversion against the wings, failed not to order the horsemen to alight, and, at the same time, directing the maniples to open, they led on this body of reserve, (*ante signa*) that is, in the front of the troops.

As to the Roman art of war, in general, the best judgment which I can presume to pass on it, after the most mature examination, is this: during almost five ages, Rome did not much outstrip her neighbours in the acquisition of advantages. Her infantry were never distinguished by their superiority, and in most of her successful wars, the victory was owing to the good order, and intrepidity, with which the cavalry charged. I am convinced that this truth is but little known; but could I persuade the military men to read Livy, with attention, I flatter myself that they would agree with me. As to the rest, the Romans had no idea of continuing the war by campaigns, and so ignorant were they of stratagems of any kind, that when Hannibal employed them, and when his Numidian cavalry gained advantages over the cavalry of the Romans, the latter

were

after three hundred and sixty years, passed in war, is Veü not yet taken ! Veü sustains a siege of ten years : (let it be observed how suspicious the resemblance is, between this account, and the account of the siege of Troy). At the end of this period, the taking of Veü is effected, solely, by the superior genius of one man. And what man ? the deliverer, the reformer of his country, the immortal *Furius Camillus* ! what shall I say of the *Samnites*, who supported a war against Rome, during a space of forty years ? or of the *Gauls*, who almost constantly triumphed over the Romans, however historians may have laboured to disguise, and even to alter the

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were involved in a series of defeats, which, as they increased, were attended by additional circumstances of humiliation.

To conclude ; it doth not appear, that the Roman authors, who wrote the annals of those times in which the republic still existed, and before flattery had arisen to its full heighth, did, at any period, fairly make out their pretensions to those excessive praises, which were afterwards lavished on their nation. Witness that confession of *Sallust*. — *Sciebam . . . facundia Græcos, gloria belli Gallos, ante Romanis fuisse . . . .* (*Bellum Catil.*)

the narrative of facts? (a) but it will be objected to me, that Rome, at length, became the mistress of the world; and I shall be asked what proofs can remain to account for her prodigious success, if her system of government, and her art of war be thus attached.

To this objection I answer, first, that he who takes the dimensions of an edifice, doth not, on that account, pretend that he can pull it down; and if I have imagined, that an enthusiastic admiration hath attributed too much merit to the polity of the Romans, I am not the less induced to revere a thousand admirable circumstances, which have been handed down to us, as examples worthy of our imitation. Secondly, I must remark, that whilst men, endued with the most profound learning, and the most lively genius, have

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(a) It is apparent that the account of the arrival of Furius Camillus, when the Romans were on the point of treating for their ransom, is no more than the fabulous invention of either pride, or flattery. The Chevalier Folard hath fully refuted it, in his commentaries on Polybius, notwithstanding that he hath passed by the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, so directly opposite not only to the assertions of Livy, and Plutarch, but, also to the authority of Tacitus, who puts this sentence into the mouth of Claudius. "Capti a Gallis sumus," . . . . V. Tacit. Annal. lib. 11.



sacrificed all their attention to the task, of finding in Rome herself, the source of her grandeur, they have too much neglected the investigation of those exterior causes, which contributed to that grandeur; as if, in determining on the power of a lever, it were not necessary to go to the extreme point, and ascertain its resistance. It is an omission, of which I accuse the celebrated Machiavel, and the illustrious Montesquieu, above all others, (*b*) because the former, and the latter could not have avoided infusing into their observations all the fire of their genius, and all the sagacity of their understanding: since they have neglected this object, let us endeavour

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(*b*) Machiavel, in the composition of his admirable discourses, concerning the first decad of Livy, doth not seem to have endeavoured to unravel the system of the aggrandizement of the Roman republic. Neither hath the president Montesquieu supposed this to be a new and necessary task: doth his work, then, correspond with its title? the reflections which he allows himself to make on the five first ages of the republic scarcely take up sixty duodecimo pages; I must confess, that, whatsoever genius may distinguish these reflections, they seem so vague, and so detached, that they resemble marginal notes, written on the same work, of which Machiavel was the commentator.

to throw some light upon it, and first, let us consider Italy, as within herself.

Nothing could have been more favourable to the establishment of any state whatsoever, than the posture of Italy, at the demise of Tarquinius Superbus, that is, at the period, when the Roman republic began to acquire a certain stability. In fact, matters were so arranged, that the neighbouring inland nations, although sufficiently warlike to exercise the courage of the Romans, were, notwithstanding, as yet, too barbarous and too unpolished, to avail themselves of the means of reducing them to submission; whilst the people inhabiting the countries nearer to the shores of the sea, were, at once, affluent and refined, but too effeminate and enervated, to render themselves formidable. Thus Italy found herself divided into indigenous nations, still retaining their barbarism, and Grecian colonies, amongst which, commerce and industry had, already, introduced luxury and corruption. The Romans, having become the conquerors of the nearest neighbouring nations, should, at the same time, have vanquished all Italy. The weakness of Capua, and the pusillanimity of the people of Tarentum,

tum, may, easily, be recollected; but it should, also, be remembered that, if Pyrrhus, less inconstant, less vague in his projects, or rather more immediately interested in the liberty of Italy, had vigorously pushed on the war, perhaps, Fabricius had been the last hero of whom Rome could have boasted. Rome, having once rendered herself the mistress of Italy, what was wanting to make her the mistress of the whole world, but to conceive it possible that she might be mistress? Carthage taught her to perceive it, and seemed to enter into competition with her, only to enable her to know her own power. In fact, what state had the Romans to fear? was it Sicily, divided into several small republics, and governed by several petty tyrants? Could the Illyrians, a despicable people, whose whole lives were spent in acts of piracy, be the objects of their apprehensions? or, could even Macedonia herself alarm them, when engaged in all the Grecian quarrels, and rendered, in her turn, the theatre of revolutions? all the forces of Europe had passed into Asia, and the military power became, lately, fixed there, as if that region had been its native residence.

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Carthage, then, was all that remained in the West : but, what, within itself, was this power of Carthage ? it was like the power which the English enjoy, at present, in America, and in India ; that is, a power, which, having been established, by an aspiring and victorious commerce, at once, extended itself along the coasts, and caused its influence to be felt, through all the inland parts : there is, however, this difference ; the power of the English pointed, at least, to a respectable object, a kind of vice, where its whole force concentrated ; whilst Carthage, like those polypusses, the vague existence of which, loses in energy, what it acquires in the superficies, seemed more jealously employed in extending than in fortifying her possessions. The Numidian kings, such as Syphax, and Masinissa ; the people of Spain, such as the Celtiberians and the Lusitanians, the inhabitants of Sardinia, and of Corfica, were to Carthage, what the Morattoes, and the Indians are, in this age, to the English establishments, and, particularly, what the Mexicans would have been to the Spaniards, if these last, contented with trading amongst them, had not cruelly resolved on their destruction. Now, these powers,

powers, thus established by commerce; find it more necessary to attack, than to prepare for a defence. Some sea-ports, some fortified factories, and, chiefly, the superiority which valour and industry acquire over the ignorance of a cowardly, and stupid people, are the only means to be employed in enforcing the obedience of so many tributary, or allied nations. In the moment of having recourse to arms, and declaring war, it is easy to obtain succours, which may follow in the train; but when the enemies, recovered from their first fright, shall have thought of making diversions, then all the advantage will begin to pass over to their side. They have only one plan of attack, but these other powers must concert a thousand methods of defence. The prospect of the vast extent of their domains, far from inspiring them with confidence, serves only to multiply their fears, and as a single sacrifice is thought a presage of bad success, the desire of preserving every thing, induces them to divide their forces. These timid precautions diffuse a languor over the operations of war. The allied nations which, before, seemed to attest their authority, soon become suspected in  
their

their turn. Instead of sending them against the enemy, it is necessary to watch over their motions; and it is thus, that a republic which seemed the sovereign of Africa, of Spain, and of Sardinia, concluded every thing, with having for its enemies, the Africans, the Spaniards, and the Sardinians.

From this picture, it is easy to judge whether the Romans, who aggrandized themselves only by repelling the attacks of their neighbours, and who were, in fact, rather raised to a relief, than aggrandized, ought to enjoy an advantage over the Carthaginians. Placed in the centre of Italy, of which they had rendered themselves the masters, their fleet might easily command the two seas, and their armies might quickly march to every part, in which the enemy should have dared to appear.<sup>(c)</sup> Besides, in the first Punic war, the Romans were but auxiliaries, and since Syracuse, under Gelo, under Dionysius, and under Agathocles, could so effectually,

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<sup>(c)</sup> Strabo imagined that the situation of Rome had contributed much to the aggrandizement of the republic: he reasoned like a geographer. Montesquieu discovers all these causes in the nature of their government: he reasons like a civilian.

and so often resist the force of Carthage; nay, could even reduce her almost to the brink of destruction, it is not astonishing that, with such an ally, Rome gained some victories. Had the life of Hiero been prolonged, he, undoubtedly, would have contrived an expedient, that might have ballanced the power of these two formidable enemies, and have applied himself to the task of delivering Sicily, from the inconvenience of being burdened with any foreign troops. Indeed, the accomplishment of such an enterprize, must have been attended with some difficulty, as this island contained a number of different small states, divided in their interests, and jealous of each other. But Hiero was protected by the Romans: there can be nothing more dangerous, than to receive protection from an ambitious power; the specious pretext with which such a power invests itself, anticipates that first effort, of which every nation, jealous of its liberties, is always susceptible.

Whilst the Romans, like a wrestler, who had the victory, without being fatigued by the contest, were happy in the undisturbed enjoyment of their own power, the empire  
of

of Carthage was shaken, even to the foundations. A war amongst the Mercenaries, a hundred times more terrible than the war of the Romans, occasions the blood to flow in rivulets, and scatters confusion around the government; it was, then, that Rome, in opposition to the faith of treaties, nay, in opposition to that decency which would be maintained, in our times, even during the very exertion of an act of usurpation, took possession of Sardinia, and thus, rendered herself the mistress of the Mediterranean.

The second Punic war quickly blazed forth, and here it is, that the Romans begin to shew themselves in their true colours. Whatsoever title to our admiration, they may have pretended to possess, they are going to lose it, in the course of some few years. A single man tore off the mask; it was not even Carthage; it was Hannibal alone, who contended with this powerful republic! what an astonishing series of defeats! what accumulated instances of weakness in her councils, and cowardice in her combats!

Yet Rome did not sink...: true.... but doth it follow that the Romans produced examples



amples of an admirable firmness, and constancy ; that Fabius was one of the greatest generals of antiquity ; and that Rome, at length, prevailed, by the strength of her constitution, and by her sole ascendancy over Carthage ? This question hath, often, been decided in the affirmative, and we cannot treat of it, here, without giving too much into common-place quotations, with which the reader must have been, frequently, fatigued. We rather chuse to hazard some reflections upon the plan, concerted by Hannibal ; and we must confess that it appears to be the most rash, and extravagant plan, that ever entered into the human mind : not, indeed, that we presume to blame these daring diversions : but what is the object of a diversion ? it is to give a terrible and unexpected stroke. Thus Agathocles, leaving Syracuse besieged, presented himself, at once, before the walls of Carthage : but the rapidity necessary to these operations, requires that they should be conducted by sea ; that their first success should be easy, and that the terror into which the enemy might be thrown, should be sudden and unforeseen.

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On these principles, let us form a judgment concerning the conduct of Hannibal. Could there have been a longer, a more laborious, or a more loathsome expedition, than that expedition in which it became necessary to cross the Alps, and the Pyrenean mountains, whilst the soldiers felt fatigue, disease, and misery, as the preludes to a bloody war? To what were his first successes owing? to the treachery of some peasants, to the helpless situation of the mountaineers, and still more, to the ignorance and misconduct of the Roman generals, who neither defended the passage of the Rhone, nor the defiles of the Alps. I pass over, in silence, those unexpected victories near Sicinum, and on the banks of the river Trebia; but what shall be said of the march of Annibal, through the morasses of Clusium; of the folly of the Roman generals who, at last, gave his army time to reinforce themselves, and who came to an engagement, at Thrasymene, in the very moment, when they ought to have been satisfied with keeping them at bay, and reducing them to the perplexing necessity of entering into Winter quarters? What! if Frederick the Great, hath been, once in his

life-time, accused of temerity, because the siege of Olmutz was drawn out to a considerable length, and this also, when the efforts of the Austrians, to retake the field, were incredible; shall Hannibal be justified, for having undertaken an enterprize, which must have proved his ruin, if attended by a single misfortune, and to which, victory herself could have insured no success?

It will, perhaps, be objected to me, that, if fortune favoured this celebrated Carthaginian, at the beginning of his expedition, she, soon afterwards, manifested her inconstancy, when the senate of Carthage refused to send into Italy the necessary supplies, towards the continuation of the war: to which I answer, first, that Hannibal, before it became likely, that he should receive any succours from Africa, had surmounted the greatest difficulties, attending his enterprize, and, of course, already submitted to all those events, of which, if a single event had proved unfavourable, he must have been irretrievably lost. Secondly, that all his credit, at Carthage, was limited to a faction; and that he should have known, that when a republic is divided into two factions, the faction  
which

which acquires its advantages abroad, is liable to lose its influence at home, because great successes attract envy, and remove, at the same time, that dread which, alone, can maintain order in a divided state. No circumstance, therefore, was more easily to be foreseen, than the fall of the Barcinian faction; nor could any thing be more inconsiderate, than to expect supplies from a jealous senate, who had never looked upon this diversion with approbation. That Hannibal should have been driven out of Italy is, then, no longer a matter of astonishment; the wonder lies, in his not having been, sooner, compelled to make a precipitate retreat: we must not admire the Romans, who fought in their own country, and were, constantly, able to oppose four armies, to a single army: it is Hannibal, whom we must applaud; Hannibal, who, destitute of all supplies, and weakened even by his own victories, perceived himself forced to keep up a defensive war, in the very heart of a country, belonging to the enemy; how particularly is that superiority of genius to be commended, which taught him to bring into subjection, an assemblage of barbarous nations,

and to acquire such a dominion, over their disposition, as empowered him, in every peculiar case of necessity, to inspire them with cool perseverance, in the place of too daring a confidence; and with a devoted obedience, instead of too presumptuous an opposition to his directions!

Amidst such a multitude of celebrated events, which arose during the second Punic war, it is impossible for me to forget one event, apparently, still more astonishing, than the enterprize of Hannibal, since it is something like a relapse into the error committed by this great general. I allude to the succours led on by Asdrubal, and defeated by the consuls, Livius, and Nero: and here, I cannot avoid inveighing against those partial prepossessions, which would not suffer, even this circumstance, to pass by, without drawing from it an opportunity of bestowing a profusion of applause on the Romans; as if any thing, but the heighth of folly, could have adopted the design of marching from Spain, and of crossing the Alps, and the Apennines, with the view of assisting an army, blocked up, as it were, in Brutium, and with difficulty, supporting themselves in this  
extremity

extremity of Italy; and as if the stolen march of Nero was not, in such a case, the most obvious operation imaginable, and even the first rudiment, and earliest lesson, in the military science. Could Hannibal, reasonably, have flattered himself with the hopes of leading his army, without interruption, across Apulia, Daunia, Samnium, and Picenum, in order to join Asdrubal, amongst the Ombri? are not two armies, thus put in motion, from opposite quarters, constantly exposed to the probability of a defeat, whilst they form only a detached part of the whole body? undoubtedly, he, whom we have observed, victorious, almost at the same instant of time, in Saxony, in Silesia, and in Pomerania; he, who, finding himself hemmed in, by three formidable armies, and on the point of seeing a fourth army rush forward to attack him, knew how, by the combined force of military policy and signal victories, to dissipate, in the space of fifteen days, these united storms; this truly great man, who bears nothing about his character, that can eclipse his glory, except the peculiarity of existing in these modern times, would have felt himself exceedingly at ease, had he been dictator

of Rome, when Hannibal made his entry into Italy. He would have smiled at the temerity of these barbarians; and that conduct, which in Livius was the effect of ignorance, in him, had been the effect of policy; I mean, that, instead of blocking Asdrubal up within the defiles of the Apennine mountains, which might have been easily accomplished, by any one, the least versed in the operations of a defensive war, he would have permitted him to advance upon the plain, and thus, have concerted the opportunity of destroying him, by a single battle.

Such a multitude of errors, committed by the Carthaginians, and the number of disasters, which were the consequences of those errors, might well accelerate the progress of the Romans, in Spain and Sicily. Thus Scipio proposed his celebrated diversion, as an enterprise, the success of which, was to prove infallible. Even his departure bore rather the air of a triumph than a dangerous expedition. Hannibal flew to the relief of Carthage; but what intelligent spectator could, then, have remained doubtful of the event? How could it be supposed, that an army, harrassed by a long and miserable war, would not be intimidated.

intimidated by that insufferable contrast, which they met with on the plains of Zama? and, what was this army? the Carthaginian Phalanx did not form a third part of it. The remainder consisted either of ill-disposed auxiliaries, or disgusted mercenaries, who, deprived of the prospect of plunder, saw nothing before their eyes, but danger. Hannibal hath been blamed for placing these mercenaries, in the front ranks; to have pitied him, had been more natural, since he had reason to mistrust them, to so violent a degree, as to conceive no hopes of their making any efforts to conquer, unless supported, or rather guarded by the national soldiers.

But under whatsoever disadvantages Hannibal may have laboured, yet, nothing can impair the glory of Scipio. (d) This hero,

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(d) The encomiums, which our ingenious author hath bestowed on Scipio, are, at once, warm and just. That illustrious Roman possessed the happy art of blending the accomplishments of the gentleman, and the scholar, with the conduct and intrepidity of the soldier. Learned, and admiring learning, he patronized and retained about him, the most eminent in the liberal sciences. If he retired from his military employments, it was only to cultivate the fruits of peace.



even in his first enterprizes, blazed out with a peculiar lustre: something divine predominates over his character, and is visible in all the instances of his fortune. Happy Rome! thou native land of the Scipios, and the Æmilii, why shouldst thou be debased by frivolous and pedantic praise? why should thy encomiasts affect to honour thee, by opi-  
 nions,

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peace. Busied either in study, or in arms, his mind was as much disciplined by science, as his body was exposed to peril. Till this memorable period, the Romans had but little knowledge of, and perhaps, less passion for, the works of art. The introduction of the finest models of this kind was reserved for Scipio, Marcellus, Paulus Æmilius, and even Mummius, the ignorant Mummius, so ridiculous a contrast to these celebrated chiefs, that he threatened the persons, who were intrusted with the carriage of some pictures and statues, taken at Corinth, that if they lost those, they should give him new ones. The rage for possessing these elegant collections became so violent, that the depredations of Verres were not either without advocates, or imitators. What the Romans could not buy, like true virtuosi, they stole: Livy, mentioning the introduction of the statues from Syracuse, makes this observation. *Cæterum inde primum initium mirandi Græcarum artium opera, licentiæque huic sacra, profanaque omnia vulgò spoliandi, factum est, quæ postremo in Roma, nos deos, templum id ipsum primum, quod a Marcello eximie ornatum est, vertit. . . . See a character of Scipio in the Connoisseur. K.*

nions, so different from those, which thou drawest upon thyself? were I to offer thee, the homage of my admiration, my fancy would transport me to the public standing places, where I might behold Marcellus, displaying to thy view, the wonders of Sicily; or rather, where I might see Emilius, leading at his chariot wheels, a train of kings, preceded by their riches: then, should I, with transport, give thee those titles, which thou hadst arrogated to thyself. I applaud thy fortune, that fortune, of which thou wast, in former ages, so vain, and to which thou hast gloried in attributing power, rather than to thy barbarous infancy, thy unsettled laws, thy tempestuous government, and even thy virtues, which were never more celebrated than in those miserable times, when thou hadst only preceptors, in the place of heroes. (e)

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(e) Proinde ab hoc orsurus aliquis initio. . . . ipso in testimonium vocaverit Romanos, ut qui plus fortunæ quam virtuti refulerint. (Plut. de fort. Rom.)

This little treatise, by Plutarch, is worth reading. It will, there, be seen that, exclusive of some superstitious ideas, his opinions concerning the Roman affairs are, apparently, like those, which we have presumed to advance. Now, as Plutarch cannot be suspected of having

From the conquest of Carthage, Rome arose the mistress of the whole world: from that period, what power could have opposed her? Could, Philip, Antiochus, or Perseus, surrounded as they were by jealous neighbouring states, and kings who were their enemies, have amused themselves with the hopes of doing more than Carthage did? It is, at this period, in particular, that the fortune of the Romans becomes so conspicuous. Rome, triumphant, or rather entering into the possession of riches, might have sunk into effeminacy; affluence might have introduced luxury; to luxury might have succeeded jealousies amongst the citizens, and these jealousies would, in their turn, have brought on troubles, and civil discord: some few years of repose would have given birth to all these

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having treated with injustice, the Romans, on whom he hath lavishly bestowed the most flattering encomiums, there is reason to believe that these sentiments were not offensive to them. It is well known that the Roman emperors were accustomed to place in their own chamber, a golden statue, representing fortune. Marcus Aurelius, perceiving himself at the point of death, ordered this statue to be carried to his successor; and this action was supposed to be the signal of his renunciation of the empire.

these evils: but the bad policy of Philip, and the presumption of Antiochus, preserved the Romans from this danger. Instead of temporising, instead of raising, as it were, a bank to repel the torrent, these two princes were so rash as to turn their arms against a people, inured to war, by a long series of military operations, and elevated with the most signal successes. This was a madness, so strikingly marked, as almost to render an enquiry into the motives of it disgusting: but as true philosophy doth not deem it a sufficient intelligence, if she discover the mistakes of human nature, nor rest till she hath seen from whence those mistakes sprang, we shall risque some reflections, on the causes of these singular events.

It cannot be denied, that whatsoever advantages Rome might, hitherto, have gained, she nevertheless had not yet acquired any great estimation amongst the Greeks. They saw all these exploits, in the light of wars between Barbarians, and were more accustomed to dwell on the expedition of Pyrrhus, than on the battle of Zama. One may even perceive that at the opening of the Macedonian war, the Romans had no allies, except the Etrurians;

Etolians; a people hated, and discredited throughout all Greece; but who, notwithstanding, attributed to themselves, all the success of the battle of Cynoscephalus, and boasted that they, alone, had triumphed over Philip. Pride, and a vain presumption, were vices, peculiar to the Greeks, of those times. There is every reason to imagine, that they did not begin to fear the power of the Romans, but in the moment, when they felt the fatal effects of it. As to Attalus, and Eumenes, his son, who assisted the Romans, during the Macedonian and Syrian wars, they can only be regarded as the kings of fortune. Wavering and ill-established, but, above all, exceedingly jealous of the great, neighbouring monarchies, they perceived no danger in seconding a republic, from whom they conjectured that they had less to fear, than to hope.

In the midst of these rising, or expiring monarchies; in the midst of the convulsions with which those new empires, the relics of the power of Alexander, were incessantly agitated; the Grecian republics, too weak, too disunited, to exist merely by their own power, did not fail to add a considerable  
force

force to the party, which they embraced. They were weights, which served to adjust the ballance, and which, perpetually, passed from one scale into the other scale: and yet, lulled by the remembrance of liberty and independency, they extended their open arms to the first state, which presented to them a picture of these blessings. Now, the Romans having made a proclamation, which was delivered by Quintus Flaminius, of their intention to restore Greece to her freedom, and to deliver all the cities, from the burden of foreign garrisons, the Greeks were such dupes, as to suppose that the whole face of their country would be changed, and that Rome would assist them, in the total abolition of arbitrary power. It is, indeed, well deserving our notice, that, prior to the conquests of Alexander, despotism was unknown in Europe, except in the neighbourhood of the Persians. It, then, sallied forth, at once, from the midst of the Grecian army; but unattended, either by the antiquity of empires, or the long ancestry of royal houses, the usual support of authority, its reign was constantly precarious, nor had it, yet, acquired any stability. The people, therefore,  
returned

returned to their liberty, as to their natural condition. The snare laid by the Romans, to entrap this most enlightened quarter of the world was, indeed, terrible; and this apparent beneficence had no other effect, than to break down all covenants, all bonds, and all political systems, amidst these unfortunate people, who, now, in exchange for the sweet sentiments of liberty, felt nothing but the conviction of their own weakness.

The Greeks had, undoubtedly acted more prudently, if, in order to prevent the Romans from rising, at their side, to such a pitch of grandeur, they had united themselves, firmly, to each other, or even formed an alliance with Philip: but the members of small republics, in which the spirit of party, usurps the place of the spirit of patriotism, chuse rather to perish with their enemies, than to yield to them the most insignificant advantage. There was no tyrant whatsoever, whom a faction would not have preferred to the chief of an opposite faction: and the confederacy of the Achaians, who were not apprehensive of the consequences of calling Philip to their assistance, when the intended war against the Etolians was in agitation,

tation, deserted Perſius, when it became neceſſary to oppoſe the Romans. As to Antiochus, his preſumption, his Aſiatic pride, the diſtance at which he, ſtill, viewed the forces of the Romans, and above all, the ſeeds of diſcontent which he ſowed amongſt the Rhodians, were the cauſes of his ruin. I ſhall ſay nothing of Perſius, ſince that prince aſcended the throne, involved in ſuch unhappy circumſtances, as to have felt no alternative between war and bondage. Thus, whatever ill ſucceſs, he had reaſon to expect from his enterpriſes, they were, notwithstanding, become neceſſary.

Such were the errors in policy, which cleared the path, along which the Romans were to paſs, ere they arrived at univerſal monarchy. We have obſerved this people, giving laws to Europe, to Aſia, and to Africa; but, like thoſe emiſſaries who, previous to the breaking out of war, are ſent to fathom the deſigns of princes, to examine into the ſtate of their forces, and diſcover what ſupplies may be expected from them, we have traversed the whole world, that we might form a juſter idea of the enterpriſes of the Romans, and of the reaſons of their ſucceſs;



cess : in this respect, we have pursued a plan, far different from that plan adopted by those writers, who have limited all their researches to the study of the Roman laws; and who may be compared to those inactive citizens, whom Paulus Æmilius upbraided with idly discussing, in the forum, the posture of affairs, and contenting themselves, in the moment, when the consul was departing on some important expedition, with merely attending him to the gates of Rome, and wishing him a fortunate success.<sup>(f)</sup> From the result of our reflections, we derive a conviction that the principles of the Roman power, existed farther beyond, than within this celebrated republic. Let us, now, examine the effects of the Roman government, in its more immediate relation to its own particulars, and the influence which it possessed over the fortune of other nations.

## CHAP.

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<sup>(f)</sup> Examine the oration, which Plutarch makes Paulus Emilius deliver, on his departure for Macedon. It is a curious passage, and capable of diminishing the opinion, which may have been conceived of the Romans in those times.

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CHAP. VI.

*The influence of the Roman government over the happiness of the people: the condition of the Romans till the time of Cæsar.*

**T**HE title of this chapter sufficiently intimates, that the conquests of the Romans, and even their heroic virtues, are, no longer to be the objects of our attention. Were the people happy? was it fortunate to live at Rome? such are the questions, which we must now resolve, as if we were in the place of Lucumo(g) or Appius, when these two strangers came to establish themselves in this city.

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(g) “ *Afterwards, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus.*”

It is needless to declare, that we shall not consider this question, relatively to the passions and manners of our contemporaries. Were it even to be proved, that the condition of the Romans did not appear to merit the envy of the French, or the English, it would not, therefore, follow, that this condition was, in itself, unhappy. In fact, whatsoever inclination we may have, to refer every thing to our own peculiar ideas, we have been long since accustomed to the admission of some particular suppositions, by which, we are contented to regulate the feelings of our mind! thus, frequently, a philosophical and passive spectator bears a part in the frenzy of Seide, or the enthusiasm of Polieuctes: but there is something more than this; there are certain generalities, certain marks, by which, the condition of a nation is manifested in the abstract. As groaning is a sign of pain; so complaints, debates, and quarrels, are proofs of the discontentment, and almost universal misery of the people: and without alluding to civil wars, famine, contagion, and the like calamities; is not the ferocity of individuals, a constant symptom of habitual sufferings? nothing,

thing, therefore, prevents us from judging of the antients, as we should judge of each other; neither are we precluded from the application of these great objects, to the most known principles of morality and politics. But, amidst so many revolutions, and such a multitude of alterations, made in the forms of the Roman government, how can we, possibly, advance an opinion concerning it, with any degree of precision, unless we divide its history into several epochas?

From the foundation of Rome, to the expulsion of the kings, may be included a period of about two hundred and forty years; from the expulsion of the kings, to the entire conquest of Italy, may be allowed the same space of time; from the first Punic war, to the destruction of Carthage, may be reckoned at about one hundred and twenty years; and from that event, to the subversion of the republic, about fifty, or sixty years, at the most, (b) these four different epochas must

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(b) If I mistake not, the banishment of Tarquin, and the total destruction of the regal power were effected in the two hundred and forty-fifth year of Rome; Italy was entirely conquered in the year 489. Carthage was

serve us, as four different points of view, in which, we may behold the Roman people. We only intreat the reader to be satisfied, although we should not call these epochas, the four ages of the republic. He will, doubtless, dispense with our distinguishing its infancy, its youth, its manhood, and its old age. All this insignificance of low rhetoric, and bad policy, could tend to no useful purpose, except a demonstration of the too general abuse of words, and the influence, which language may possess over opinions. In fact, as soon as men became so weak, as to esteem the frivolous flights of intellects, which are more subtle, than penetrating, they were, by degrees, accustomed to affix to them some meaning; and they no longer considered republics, or, even governments, but as kinds of physical beings, whose diseases, habitudes, regimen, &c. it was necessary to examine. The reason of all  
this,

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was overthrown in 621; and the republic was extinguished in 706. It was not necessary for the ingenious and elegant author to write with the precision of an arithmetician. It is rather the philosopher, and friend of human nature, than the formal chronologist, who, to communicate his researches with the greater perspicuity to the reader, divides this period into four æras. K.

this, is, that nothing exercises and fatigues the mind more than abstraction; and that this act of withdrawing some part of the idea from the other parts of it, hath need of supporting itself on sensible circumstances. Hence, it is, that the language of argument is, constantly, on the point of running out into a figurative stile; a stile, equally vicious and incorrect, of which, allegory is the worst abuse. Thus, it may be observed, that the more ignorant and unpolished a nation is, the more its language abounds with metaphors and comparisons. They are the artful expedients of the mind, to elude that exact definition, which so frequently baffles all her powers. Are the principles of a republic to be unfolded? it is compared to a living being. Are the properties of a just man to be explained? He is likened to a republic. Thus, are we, incessantly, turning round, within a circle of errors, where every thing meets with its resemblance, and where nothing is decisive.<sup>(i)</sup> But it is not sufficient

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(i) Plato, in writing his treatise on a republic, seems to have had no object in view, except the teaching us in what justice consisted. He compares man to a republic,

to condemn, and avoid these abuses, introduced before our time, it may, perhaps, be necessary to open, for ourselves, new roads; and since we must discover some means, of ascertaining the spirit of the different political constitutions, it might not, probably, be improper to consider, whether, instead of fixing our whole attention on laws, and institutions, which are, frequently, the effect of chance,

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public, in which reason is the monarch, and where the passions form the common people. To this subtle idea, we owe those ingenious extravagancies, which some modern authors are, still, now and then, reviving to the disgrace of philosophy! as to the rest, Plato was not always so allegorical; nor hath he, at times, been above descending into exact definitions. Diogenes Laertius observes, that he made the excellence of government consist in three circumstances. First, in the goodness of the laws; secondly, in the obedience, which the people paid to those laws; and thirdly, in the existence of such customs, and rules, as were able to supply any defect in the laws. In like manner, to discover the vices in a government, Plato proposed the examination of three things, in particular; first, if the laws were not serviceable, either to the subject-inhabitants of the kingdom, or to foreigners; secondly, if these laws may be transgressed with impunity; thirdly, if there be no laws, and if tyranny, solely, predominate in the state. There may be less of ingenuity in this, but it is much more intelligible.

chance, it were not better to employ ourselves, particularly, in the investigation of those circumstances, under which, a people may have formed themselves, and in an enquiry, concerning the character and interests peculiar to mankind, in the moment when they entered into a society, and had enacted their laws. In fact, the people must have existed prior to the establishment of laws; and the founders, either of republics, or of empires, could, scarcely, have been, all, in the same position, when they had settled their forms of government. Now, there is reason to suppose that, these first moments threw a very considerable influence over the future; so much, indeed, that one might propose this political problem: from the given circumstances, attending the establishment of a people, find out the appertaining spirit and character(*k*). Thus, for instance, one might

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(*k*) I cannot determine whether this observation hath been neglected by political authors, or whether I have never been stricken with it, in any part of their works: but I have a particular pleasure, in paying a tribute of applause to the writer, to whom I am indebted for it. I mean the author of *l'histoire politique du gouvernement Romain*.



be convinced, that, whatever modifications were designed to have been introduced, amongst the governments of Tyre, Sparta, and Athens, the spirit of commerce ought to have reigned in the first, the spirit of equality, in the second, and the spirit of independence, in the third. (1)

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(1) I cannot dispense with observing, in this place, that the above cited idea, differs, widely, from the maxim, advanced by Machiavel, in his discourse on Livy. He, there, asserts, that, to enable a state to exist, for any long period, it is necessary to call it, frequently, back to the first principles of its constitution. It appears to me that almost every state hath been established in circumstances, quite opposite to those circumstances, in which, in process of time, it became involved; and that, therefore, it would be useless, and even detrimental, to have recourse to such a remedy; every alteration in a state is not a certain sign of the corruption of the people. The variations introduced by particular circumstances, may, and, even, ought to have a great influence upon the government. A barbarous and unpolished nation may become commercial, and engaged in agriculture; whilst a commercial nation may grow warlike. It is, therefore, highly necessary, amidst these changes of government to distinguish with precision, that which appertains to the nature of things, and that which relates to the corruption of mankind. Idleness, pride, and disobedience are certain marks of corruption; but the changes of fortune,

new

This method of considering our subject, seems to throw it into a new, and more perspicuous light. But, amidst the different applications, in which we might employ it, we shall confine ourselves to the Romans, and examine under what circumstances, their first legislation endeavoured to give some form to the state.

Let

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new pretensions, and alterations in ranks, and dignities, flow not from the same principle. At Rome, for instance, a Plebeian might stand for the consulship, and yet the republic would not have been corrupted: and in like manner, at London, a merchant might sit in the house of commons, without any disparagement to the nation. At Rome, the perpetuity of families, the honours conferred in time of war, virtues, and manners, soon raised the consequence of the Plebeians. At London, the spirit of commerce hath rendered the merchant, as important as the man of quality. The Plebeian, in the time of Canuleius, could not have been compared to the Plebeian in the time of Valerius; neither is there any resemblance between the modern merchant of London, and the merchant in the reign of Edward the third: now, to have pretended, at a particular crisis, to have brought back a state, to its first principles, would, if at Rome, have reduced a powerful and respectable people, to their original misery, and debasement; and, if in England, it would have established a feudal government, in the place of a government, founded on property, and equal representation;

Let us recollect what hath been observed, in the preceding chapter, and we shall perceive that, according to all appearance, Romulus was but an adventurer, of whom Numitor availed himself, to be revenged on Amulius, and who soon afterwards was, in his turn, so suspected by Numitor, that this prince knew of no circumstance; which he, so eagerly, desired, as the immediate opportunity of getting rid of him, by furnishing him with means, wherewith to establish a colony. Romulus, therefore, assembled some young men, belonging to the city of Alba, with whom he joined those adventurers, who  
chose

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tion; we must enquire, then, first, what hath been the character of a nation, at the time of its establishment. Secondly, what influence this national character had upon the constitution of the state. Thirdly, if the first customs, and primitive laws are so good, as to merit the being preserved, or if the alterations in circumstances have drawn them into the legislation. It is in this last case, that the original, and, primitive character of a nation, may find itself acting in opposition to its interests; and then great care must be taken, lest it be led back to its first principles: it is even necessary to suffer them to be obliterated, as much as possible, for fear that the people, always willing to become, again, what they had been, might never prove what they ought to be.

chose to offer themselves. Amongst these last were some individuals, whose birth, or affluence entitled them to a superior distinction; they were separated from the lower class of the people, and united with the chief of the Albans; they constituted the body of Patricians. No sovereign, who doth not establish his power, either by force of arms, or by some particular revolution, can become arbitrary. It was, therefore, the duty of Romulus, to pay the greatest attention to the principal members of his colony. From hence, arose that spirit of aristocracy, and that characteristic of fierceness, which it always preserved. A colony established, without any regard to commerce and industry, must of course be driven into acts of plunder; from plunder arise reprisals; and reprisals render a state of war necessary, and habitual. From hence, may be derived the first interior arrangement of the city of Rome: from hence, proceeded the plan of throwing the Roman people into the form of a legion; a form, the best adapted to their situation, at that period, when the women were so few in number, within this infant colony,

colony, that it might be considered as a little army.

The first want, of which a warlike colony becomes sensible, is the want of population. As pillage is more attended to than the cultivation of the earth, and war more pursued than commerce, soldiers are more necessary than slaves; hence, arises the principle of putting no individual to the sword, and of reducing no enemy into captivity, who delivers up his arms; a principle, which merits the strictest attention, since it may be considered, as the source of all the success, which waited upon the Romans.

A colony, exposed to the dangers of war, should always be prepared for battle; nor can it dispense with keeping its members, as nearly collected together, as possible. From hence, proceed a limitation of estates, and the necessity of confining the heads of families to the cultivation of, only, a small portion of land. This necessity gives birth to frugality; and frugality introduces austerity of manners, &c.

A colony, in which, about the time of its establishment, the number of women was extremely inconsiderable, and conquered, also,  
by

by the power of the sword, would, of course, reduce these women into a subjection to the most rigorous laws; nor would the children be exempted from the same severe regulations. (*m*) From hence, may be derived, that  
cruel

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(*m*) It is certain that the wives were punished with death, for the slightest offences: for example, if they had drunk wine. Fathers enjoyed the power of life and death over their children, and this barbarous authority included a right to sell them, as slaves. Dionysius Halicarnassius hath observed, that all legislators have thought it proper, to fix the length of time, during which, the children were to remain subject to paternal authority; that the entrance into the age of puberty was the period appointed by some legislators, for their enfranchisement; whilst others had determined that they should receive it, on the instant of their marriage: but that the Romans, more wise than all the rest of the world, had appointed no particular limits to this authority.

The inhuman custom, which Lycurgus established at Sparta, was adopted by Romulus, with only one softening restriction. The latter, instead of permitting the Romans to expose their weak and deformed children, in the first moments of their existence, gave orders, that they should be preserved, during three years; as in that interval, either receiving health and strength, their limbs might knit themselves into better proportion; or, their parents might acquire an affection for them, which they were too unnatural to feel before. Although this law was confirmed by the laws of the twelve tables, it  
was,

cruel authority, exercised by husbands over their wives, and, even, by fathers over their offspring. The power of fathers is, always, more sharp, and more absolute than the power of mothers. A mother may be considered as the chief moderatrix of paternal despotism.

Such are the observations, which the Roman people, in their infant state, naturally, suggest to us. However inconsiderable the  
number

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was, yet, too frequently, transgressed : it would be natural to imagine, that paternal authority, so barbarously exerted, must have extinguished all traces of filial piety ; but Rome abounded with striking instances of the prevalence of this vertue ; and, as a proof, that the severity of those laws, to which the wives were subject, was kept inactive, by their exemplary behaviour, let it be remembered, that more than four ages had elapsed, when Carvilius Ruga, by repudiating his wife, occasioned the very first divorce. K.

It had not the appearance of a modern separation. The chastity of the fair Roman was unfulfilled by suspicion. Sterility, a misfortune, but not a crime, was all the husband could alledge against her ; it was usual for the citizens to swear that they married, with the view of having children. Respect for the oath which he had taken, alone, induced Carvilius to dissolve the union. The motive was, at least, plausible ; and yet all Rome beheld him, during the remainder of his life, with indignation. K.

number of these colonists may be, they, notwithstanding, afford us an ample intimation, that they were destined to prove, constantly, ambitious in their projects, fierce in their modes of government, and ferocious in their manners. However, the admission of the Sabines, into the city of Rome; however the peaceable reign of a foreign legislator,<sup>(n)</sup> who attempted, with the assistance of religion, and the laws, to soften the manners of a barbarous people; and however, the more splendid reign of another foreigner,<sup>(o)</sup> who extricated the Romans, from their groveling situation, by providing for their earliest, and most essential wants, may have, somewhat, modified their original characteristic, we are, still, certain of tracing it, from the assassination of Camillus, down to the proscriptions of Sylla.

But, were it even true, that the virtues of infant Rome had so far prevailed over her vices, that happiness may be said to have resided within her first cottages, what consequences can be drawn from hence, conducive to the welfare of mankind? would it follow

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<sup>(n)</sup> Numa Pompilius.

<sup>(o)</sup> Tarquin, the elder.



follow that the people must, generally, enjoy the greatest share of felicity, in a newly-rising state? but the beginnings of empires are, only as moments, in the series of ages; and the object of a good government should be to give permanence to public happiness. Rome, incessantly, engaged in battles, that she might procure some sheaves of corns; Rome, at once, a stranger to the tranquility of social life, and the activity of industry; Rome, still poor, still destitute of power, doth not present to our view a very flattering prospect? and what, at the bottom, could the common people be, who suffered themselves to be governed, during the space of eight days, by a king,<sup>(p)</sup> already, in his grave, a prey to worms; who, at length, received from a female hand, a slave for their monarch; and who, soon afterwards, became victims to a detestable tyrant, from whose yoke, they, perhaps, could never have been freed, if the sense of honour, had not been  
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<sup>(p)</sup> Tanaquilla, the wife of Tarquin the elder, thought it proper to conceal the death of this prince, until Servius Tullius should have fixed his plan to succeed him. Servius Tullius was born a slave.

more violent, than the sense of liberty? and, let it not be imagined, that a certain ease of life, a kind of satisfaction which springs from an equality of fortunes, could have indemnified the Romans for what they might have felt from other quarters, since the misery of the people, the tyranny of the rich, the rigour of impositions, and the weight of usury had, all, risen to excess, from the time of Servius Tullius. (g) It must be confessed, therefore, that this first epocha of the government of kings doth no where afford us a picture of happiness.

In the succeeding times, we shall, probably, perceive more grandeur than happiness; more vertue than consolation. Their kings had, scarcely, been expelled, when a cruel war was kindled to accomplish their re-establishment. In spite of her victories, gained at the lake Regillus, Rome perceived her

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enemies

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(g) See the oration, in which Dionysius Halicarnassius supposes this king to have declared to the Roman people, that, by ordering a general Census, he only meant to distribute lands amongst those, who had none, and to remedy the bad effects of usury, which is a natural consequence of the difficulty attending the payment of taxes.

enemies encamped upon the Mons Janiculus; and nothing but the intrepidity of a single man effected the preservation of all. (r) The death of Tarquin, indeed, dissipated the alarms of the new republic; but the people, in the room of one tyrant, whom they had lost, found a thousand tyrants, amidst the Patricians. Were I desirous of fixing an opinion, concerning the happiness of the Romans, during this epocha, I should not ask for any assistance, except the perusal of the marginal notes of Livy; they would furnish us, solely, with instances, either of exterior wars, or of interior troubles; these last

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(r) It may easily be guessed, that I mean Horatius Cocles. As to the story of Mutius Scævola, I shall allude to it, in this note, for no other reason, than that I may remark, how greatly a taste for the marvellous still prevails among us. Dionysius Halicarnassius makes no mention of this singular action of Mutius, who burns his hand, in attestation of a falsehood; but the fact is extraordinary, and we seem so much more pleased to follow Livy, than Dionysius, that we do not give ourselves the trouble, to observe the difference so remarkable between the narratives of the two authors. Mr. de Pouilli, in his learned work, entitled "Dissertation sur l'incertitude de l'histoire des quatre premiers siècles de Rome," proves that this account of Scævola was an imitation of the recital of a similar transaction, taken from a Greek historian.

were still more terrible than their battles, because war was esteemed a remedy for, or, at least, an alleviation of the public misfortunes. How deplorable must that condition have proved, in which this scourge became desirable; in which, the tears of the people could not have been dried up, until the streams of human blood began to flow!

Amidst these habitual evils, what calamities poured in from foreign quarters! the city taken by enemies, hitherto, unknown! a general scarcity of provisions! contagions! miseries of every kind! . . . . . (s)

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(s) My readers will, probably, be surpris'd, whilst they observe me placing to the same account famine, and, particularly, contagions. Their astonishment would be just, were these calamities the effects of accident. It is well known, that the cultivation of the earth prevents famine, but it is no less certain, that it prevents diseases: first, because famines are the general sources of epidemical disorders: secondly, because the air is the most wholesome, when the earth is in the best state of cultivation: thirdly, because peace, and plenty, furnish the means of preserving health, by useful establishments, such as aqueducts, common sewers, neatness in houses, and cloathing, a choice of aliment, salutary liquors, gardening, &c. Mr. Corbyn Morris, (in his "collection of bills of mortality," quarto) hath remarked, that  
since

But it will be said ; “ *what a terrible enumeration have we, here, of those evils, which the Roman people suffered. You will the more easily reap an advantage from it, because, misfortune being the common lot of humanity, the idea of that misfortune, is but too conspicuous to the view of all mankind. But love for ones country, an attachment to the laws, and the enthusiasm of glory are all factitious passions, and, to be known, they must have been experienced. Thus, whilst you give a loose to these speculations, you become more sensible of the misery of the Romans, than of the happiness, which they may have enjoyed ; and whilst your mind compares, your too partial imagination turns the scale.*” . . . Not to neglect this objection, let us enter more particularly into the subject.

The strongest passion which hath been attributed to the Romans, is the love of glory. Let us, for a moment, adopt this general opinion, and endeavour to apply it to the  
welfare

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since the English have entered so much into gardening, the frequent epidemical disorders, to which they gave the name of plagues, have been less common, and fatal, than they were before. . .

welfare of the people. We shall, doubtless, perceive a militia, trained up to war, continually, desiring that they might be led on to conquest. The lowest citizens, as they walked along the forum, would draw out the plan of operations, and fix the æra of victory. Even the most tender wives, the most timid mothers would catch the universal enthusiasm, and the people, intoxicated with success, would easily forget their hardships.

How different is this representation from the reality ! let us no longer judge of Rome, by what historians tell us, but by what they teach us. Let us, in imagination, transport ourselves into the heart of this city, and, there, perceive a sorrowful, and unhappy populace trembling before the senate. Let us hear them implore this senate, at one moment, with sighs, and at another moment with threats, that they would deign to grant them some acres of land, for their subsistence. Let us listen to the cries of those brave soldiers, who shew, amidst their honourable scars, the disgraceful marks of whips, and chains ; unhappy wretches, thrown, without distinction, amongst the meanest slaves, be-

cause they could not pay for the arms, with which they had pierced their enemies, and the bread, which they had eaten, on the day of battle !..... The gates open ; the senators appear ; their savage looks declare their projects ; a barbarous joy exults in every feature. What are they preparing to announce to the people ? the alleviation of the public calamities, tranquility, plenty ?..... No ; but, the enemy, tempted, either by the secret intrigues of the senate, or, by that confidence, which long diffensions could not have failed to inspire, advances with hasty strides, and will, soon, appear before the gates of the city. Already, the consuls, seated in their Curule chairs, summon the young men to their tribunal. To-morrow, the enemy is to be attacked. The glory of repelling them may, perhaps, be bought with the blood of three thousand citizens. Perhaps, too, this enemy may carry fire, and the sword, even into the capital. But what doth it signify ? at this time, the Agrarian law shall not be proclaimed.

It is thus, that wars are kindled ; it is thus, that the love of glory intoxicates the Romans ;

mans; it is thus, that they march on towards the conquest of the world.(t)

But, what will be the issue of this war? some few equivocal successes. The enemy will be repulsed, or, perhaps, retire of their own accord. However it be, the Romans will not think of profiting by the advantages which they may have gained over them: they will, purposely, avoid pursuing them into their own territories, and, soon, return to Rome, to demand bread from the senate.

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(t) "Di modo che volendo Roma levare le cagion de' tumulti levava ancora la cagion dell' ampliare."

Machiavelli de discorsi, liv. 2. pag. 20.

"Had Rome been willing to have removed the occasion of the tumult, she should also have removed every occasion capable of increasing it. K.

Saint Augustin, (de civitate Dei, lib. 3. cap. 10.) after having described the continual wars, in which the Romans were engaged, makes a reflection something similar to that of Machiavel. Perhaps (says he) these continual wars were necessary to the aggrandizement of the Romans, but what individual would wish to acquire a gigantic stature, at the expence of his health? idonea verò causa ut magnum esset imperium, cur esse deberet inquietum? nonne in corporibus hominum satius est modicam staturam cum sanitate habere, quam ad molem aliquam giganteam perpetuis afflictionibus pervenire?



Another objection. . . . "The Romans, (it will be said) were poor; true; but this poverty, far from being a misfortune, became a treasure to them. Frugality was to them, a substitute for affluence, and as they had no wants, they were ignorant of the value of opulence." . . . . They were ignorant of the value of opulence? whence came it, then, that the Patricians had gotten possession of all the lands belonging to the people, by usury, and of all the lands belonging to the republic, by fraud? why had these proud men such vast estates, replenished with those, who were, at first, reduced to slavery, by the chance of war, and then, purchased, at a low rate, from the needy soldiers? why did they, by a hundred times, prefer driving the republic on the brink of its destruction, to the parting with a single inch of their lands? why did they rather chuse to offer the people a sacrifice of rank magistracy, and even religion,<sup>(u)</sup> than

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(u) None but the nobility enjoyed the privilege of taking the auspices: for this reason, the spirit of aristocracy, and the spirit of superstition were inseparable. We shall have occasion, in the course of this work, to prove

than relinquish their riches? (x) It were needless to deny, that at Rome, the people were poor, and discontented, and the great, rich, and avaritious. Thus, in the midst of troubles and revolutions, after the tyranny of the Decemvirs, the ravages of the Gauls, and the invasion of Pyrrhus; after one hundred and fifty years, all spent in war, against the Æqui, the Volscians, and the Etruscans; after forty years of perpetual engagements, with the Samnites, Rome, constantly torn by divisions and always poor, arrived, as we have already shewn, at the third epocha; that is, at the conquest of Italy, and the beginning of the first Punic war.

I must confess that this æra is not without its attractions. The same gloom no longer seems to hang about the picture of the Roman

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prove that, with aristocracy, all the religion of the Romans became extirpated; an opening was made for the sects of Stoics, and Epicureans; and from hence, likewise, may we trace one of those concealed paths, which led to the establishment of christianity.

(x) It was only to avoid the Agrarian law, that the Patricians permitted the Lex Sicinia, and the Lex Licinia to pass: by these, marriages and divisions of magistracies between the Plebeians, and the Patricians, were permitted, for the first time.

man history. Civil discords are appeased, the most signal victories become the rewards of military toils, and Rome is beholden with awe, by nations beyond the bounds of Italy. Were authors to be consulted, we should read that this moment was the moment in which the successes of the republic had not, yet, altered the virtues of its members. Rome, if we are to abide by our references to these historians, was already powerful, and hitherto uncorrupted. But, far from adopting such an opinion, we shall, on the contrary, endeavour to form a more exact idea of the morals, and felicity of the Roman people.

The people, who can live upon a little, are not, therefore, happy; the Goths and Vandals lived upon a little, and yet, they marched, in search of plenty, into other climates. The people, who are inured to toil and fatigue, are not, therefore, happy; the Goths and Vandals were inured to toil, and fatigue; and yet, they passed into other countries, in quest of luxury and repose. The people, who are the most powerful in battle, are not, therefore, happy; they engage in battle, only, to obtain peace, and the conveniences

veniences of life. The people, enjoying ease, and liberty ; attached to their property ; and, above all, desiring no change of condition, are happy. Now, one proof that the Romans never partook of such happiness, is, that from the very first moment of their having known what riches were, they coveted them, with a degree of fury, and to that lust, sacrificed all their principles and manners.

In the four hundred, and thirteenth year, from her foundation Rome acquired the sovereignty of Capua. Scarcely had the army taken up their quarters, in this country, so celebrated for its alluring productions, before the spirit of revolt invaded it. The soldiers spurned at the authority of their chiefs, and concerted a plan, whereby to establish themselves in Capua. What treasons poured in at once ! desertions, breach of oaths, and contempt of military power ! no consideration, no circumstance, however, could controul these men, so greedy after riches. The army is separated ; the precaution was useless : the greater part of the army, persisted in rebellion, and marched directly to Rome.

Shortly

Shortly afterwards, the city of Rhegium demands succours from Rome. A legion is granted to them. How are these vertuous men employed? without any attention to the faith of treaties, and without the least regard to hospitality, they massacre all the citizens, compel the widows to receive them, as their husbands, and thus, take the possession of this unhappy town: to such an excess can beings of a savage mind be driven, by the irresistable allurements of a life, in which every convenience might be enjoyed, with indolence! these two pictures will, sufficiently, enable the reader to judge if the Romans were happy at Rome, and if they preferred their condition, to the condition of other nations.

The first Punic war plunged the republic once more into new troubles. In fact, although during the course of this war, Rome was more successful, than unfortunate, yet the people did not receive from these advantages, a compensation for the defeat of Regulus, and the loss of their three fleets, which were either taken or sunk. A victory, frequently, restores the possession of a country,

try, which had been seized on, in consequence of a former defeat; but never can it restore the husband, to the widow, or the father, to the orphan. It is difficult to describe a more shocking situation, than the situation, in which the republic found itself, after the first fifteen years of the Punic war. Not to mention the perpetual humiliations, which it underwent, the Census of its citizens, diminished almost to within one half, is an ample proof of the sensible losses, under which it laboured.

When Carthage became humbled, then, arose an uninterrupted series of good fortune, in which every success was more splendid than the former; thus, the conclusion of our third period makes amends for the beginning. It was, then, that war appeared useful, because the spoils of all the nations were regularly brought to Rome.(y) But, who profited

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(y) Metellus hath been reproached, for having displayed, during his triumph, the statues, and other works of art, which he brought from Syracuse. No censure can be more frivolous. Why did the Romans fight? you will answer, to be the masters of the world. And why, did they desire to be the masters of the world,  
but

fited by this plunder? first, the public treasury, every thing having been carried either thither, or to the temples; next, some avaritious generals; and lastly, the order of knights, who enjoyed no share of these riches, until the duties had been settled. Now, all these conquests might, indeed, have produced to the Roman people, some public fights, some festivals, and some games; but never did they scatter plenty amongst the necessitous. An instance may be met with, in the history of the Gracchi. Tiberius, in his harangue from the tribunal, was not apprehensive of exclaiming, thus: "the wild beasts have caverns, and dens, whither they can retire, whilst the citizens of Rome can neither find a roof, nor shed, beneath the covering of which, they might enjoy a shelter, from the inclemency of the weather; deprived of any settled residence, and precluded from any habitation, they wander, like unhappy outlaws, even within the bosom of their own country.

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but to enjoy riches, arts, and every thing which renders life agreeable? To praise a people for their frugality, during their infant state, is something like commending a rich principal in office, for not having kept a coach, when he was, only, a poor deputy.

country. You are called the lords and masters of the universe. What lords! what masters! you! to whom they have not even left an inch of land, to serve you for a grave." . . . . . However exaggerated this picture may have been, the disturbance which it occasioned amongst the people, is a proof that it was not, absolutely, a faint resemblance, nor inapplicable to some of the citizens. Besides, it is well known, that riches, acquired without toil, and divided amongst a very small number of persons, introduce luxury, and corruption; (z) or rather, every thing is already corrupted, when luxury appears; for luxury is but an effect, erected into a principle. It comes not, until all order hath, already, been destroyed, and whether it arise from the inequality of circumstances, or whether it flow from the abuse  
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(z) In the year 572, which was long before the ruin of Carthage, Caius Mænius, the prætor, was directed by the senate, to obtain a list of all the poisoners, which might be found either at Rome, or within ten miles of the place: at the end of some few days, this magistrate wrote word to the senate, that he had already discovered three thousand, and that the number seemed to increase, in proportion to his enquiries.



of affluence, it, constantly, maintains a supposition that, there are easy and rapid means of acquiring money, and that passions exist, which are equally contrary to decency and honesty.

The opinion of all mankind, and the sentiments of every age, exempt us from the necessity of levelling our censures against that epocha, which we had fixed upon, as the fourth epocha. No one can peruse, without horror, the account of the revolutions, during the times of the Gracchi, of Marius, and of Sylla. We will turn aside from the sight of this fatal picture, and, at once, conclude with observing, that Rome hath not, in any of those æras, into which we have directed our researches, enjoyed a measure of felicity, capable of making her condition envied, and her forms of government admired.(a)

#### CHAP.

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(a) The gloomy sadness, peculiar to the Romans, until the reign of Augustus, is another objection to their pretended happiness. When Cato accused Murena, the bitterest reproach, which he levelled at him, was his having danced. His advocate, Cicero, exclaimed against the cruelty of this allegation, and asserted, that it was impossible to impute to a man the crime of dancing, without

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CHAP. VII.

*The influence of the Roman government over the happiness of all the different foreign states. The situation of the world, at the era of the subversion of the republic.*

**I**N proportion to the advances which we make, in our observations on the history of human kind, we perceive ourselves more and more stricken with astonishment; not that we admire, with the multitude, that succession

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without supposing that he had, previous to the commission of the act, given a loose to intoxication, and every other kind of debauchery.

It may be, farther, observed, that the religion of the Romans was, constantly, as ferocious as their manners. After the battle of Cannæ, they thought it expedient to bury alive, a male and female Gaul, and a Grecian

of events, and that variety of scenes, which occupy the surface of our globe; but rather, because, whilst we were employed in this attempt, it became impossible for us, to sacrifice to the study of facts, the sublime contemplations of ancient nature, without being surpris'd, and even humbled, by the difference, which exists between the history of the world and the history of man. Here, we see

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cian man and woman, that the gods might be appeas'd. This abominable barbarity was, amongst them, nothing more than customary. Besides, religion was equally intolerant during the æra of ancient, and the æra of modern Rome. When the magistrate perceived, in the second Punic war, that several new rites and some foreign modes of worship, had been introduced into the city, it was decreed, that all these forms should be surrendered up to the prætor; nor was the observation of them, any more permitted. This intolerant spirit, not confined to religion, infected even literature. In the five hundred and ninety-first year, from the foundation of Rome, all the Rhetoricians were driven from the city. In the six hundred and sixtyeth year, some Latin Rhetoricians, desirous of establishing schools, in conjunction with the Greek Rhetoricians, were forbidden to teach, whilst these last were confirm'd in their exclusive privileges. There is, indeed, but little reason to be astonish'd at such extravagancies, when we observe, in the "Testament politique," attributed to Cardinal de Richlieu, a minister gravely agitating this question:

see the waters preparing the earth, which we are to cultivate, whether their slow retreat forms the different beds, of which it is composed, or whether their more rapid course marks out the vallies, and the mountains. Myriads of aquatic animals seem to have crowded, as it were, upon each other, to have existed, and to have perished in heaps, only to furnish the materials, wherewith we raise

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question: "Should the care of public education, be committed, exclusively, to the Jesuits, or to the Franciscans?"

Such a question might, naturally, proceed from the bigotted, and persecuting Richlieu; but as he was not the author of the above-mentioned work, this absurdity cannot, positively, be attributed to him. The "Testament politique" was written by another, who, to fix the reputation of his production, with the public, had sheltered it under the name of the minister. Controversial and religious tracts were the only papers, belonging to the cardinal, which were discovered, after his death. His niece the Duchesse d'Aguillon ordered these to be revised, corrected, and published. On politics, a subject which Richlieu always mentioned with great reserve, he wrote nothing. In France, the death of a celebrated minister hath been as regularly followed by his political testament, as by his funeral. Colbert, Albéroni, and the Marshal de Bellisle, were scarcely in their graves, when they astonished us with sentences, which, when living, they neither wrote, nor spoke. The testament of Bellisle was made by Chevrier. K.

our edifices; whilst devouring fires, issuing from the entrails of the earth, have thrown into the cavities of the rocks, the metals necessary in the structure of these works. There, piles of stones arise, like immense towers, whose height seems to command the universe: in one place, the enormous mass astonishes by its irregularity; and in another place, by its perfect symmetry. Here, dreadful alluvions open a passage for the ocean, and conduct it into the midst of the land. The black sea breaks over its bounds, and forms the Archipelago of Greece, whilst other inundations divide America into two districts, and bear away, from it, the Antilles. Marine monsters lie buried on the tops of mountains. The vast size of the bones of the terrestrial animals is a proof of the antiquity of their race, and points out the gradual degradation of the species, whilst, at the same time, vegetation springs forward towards perfection, and seems to receive from man, a kind of new education.

Such are the magnificent objects, which the history of the world presents to our view. What shall we discover in the history of mankind?

kind? facts imperfectly known, and yet, extremely recent. Thirty ages, at the most; form the domain of history: a small number of dynasties, three, or four nations, celebrated by their conquests, compose, if I may be allowed the expression, the sole titles of nobility, in the political world. Let us, however, run over this brief genealogy, and only consider what, generally, concerns the situation of mankind.

We shall not pretend to examine, whether, as an ingenious author hath affected to prove, a despotic form of government drew its beginning from a principle of fear, which some revolutions, effected in different parts of the world, had infused into the human mind; or whether this government, patriarchial in its origin, be more natural to an indigenious people: it appears exceedingly certain, that a power, vested in a single man, subsisted in Asia, from time immemorial; whereas the first examples of a republican government, are to be met with amongst newly-rising colonies. We perceive, then, that from the first, the great monarchies appeared upon the theatre of the world, which was, then, con-

fined to Asia, and to Ægypt. Several colonies settled themselves, afterwards, in Asia Minor, and in Greece; and these colonies, having, in their turn, sent out other colonies, the republican form of government, more suitable to men, living in a state of equality, easily propagated itself in these new establishments. Here, also, it introduced that prosperity, which so usually attends its progress. Soon, this modern society of men, different in their manners, and principles, contend with the ancient society, and conquer: but an ambitious youth, already corrupted by his good fortune, prefers the manners of the vanquished, to the manners of the victors. Incapable of raising himself to an equal rank with gods, he debases his subjects, below the condition of humanity, and thus, degrading his exploits, proves that it was, only, the despot, and not despotism, whom he was anxious to attack. The period, during which, mankind groaned under the laws of this senseless master, was short: but, at his decease, conquests were so recent, the martial genius so predominant, and the interests of the conquerors, so closely connected with the system  
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of oppression, that military despotism was easily substituted in the place of hereditary despotism. Shortly afterwards, this government, which had been adopted by the Greeks, ran back from Asia into Europe, and spread itself through Macedonia, Thrace, Illyrium, Epirus, &c. It was then, that liberty, driven towards the West, took refuge at Carthage, and at Rome: but Rome, having quickly triumphed over her rival, her insatiable ambition occasioned the despotism of kings to be succeeded by the despotism of the people; and this tyranny was the most fatal of all tyrannies. Thus, in few words, may be pursued the account of that small number of general facts, with which history presents us, and which lead us to such reflexions, as compose the subject of this chapter.

The maxim, "*il mondo invecchia, e invecchiando intristisce,*" (that as the world grows old it becomes the more wicked) was but too true, during the epoch under our examination; but I do not suppose it applicable to the present times. The conquests of Alexander were, to mankind, a signal of depravation; before this period, the known world



was divided into two parts, one of which parts was filled with little flourishing republics, and the other part occupied by a vast, and ancient monarchy. On the one hand, prosperity was in the place of repose; and on the other hand, repose was in the place of prosperity. In this situation, the republics received, in the enjoyment of their liberty, amends for their perpetual dissensions; and the subjects of the great king felt a satisfaction in the midst of slavery, because they had been long accustomed to tranquility. Alexander, in the course of ten years, altered the situation of all these people. He died in the arms of victory; and yet, scarcely were his eyes closed, when his generals waged, against each other, the most bloody wars. When nothing was left for the Macedonians to destroy, they mutually turned upon themselves, and tore each other in pieces; like those rats, the plagues of the North, which, covering whole countries, perpetually ravage the land, as they proceed, till, not finding any more subsistence, they devour one another. The universe was, indeed, revenged, but dear was the price of that revenge; all upon the surface of the globe was over-  
thrown.

thrown. The republics preserved only the vain appearance of liberty, which left them the vices of the government, without preserving its advantages. Inquietude supplied the place of force. Factions became multiplied and irreconcilable. Yet all their disputes were confined to their choice of tyrants. Shall the preference be given to the Seleucides, the Lagides, or the kings of Macedonia? to whom shall crowns be decreed, and whose statues shall be thrown down? (*b*) such is the subject of all their deliberations. And here, I must beg leave to observe, that nothing can be more deplorable, and at the same time, more contemptible than republics in their decline. Their ancient customs seem to be new sources of vice and ignominy. Their public councils become, henceforward, no better than the vulgar bawlings of the market, or the abusive clamors, which prevail amongst the meetings of the mob. The love of glory is extinguished, and in its place, appear an  
empty

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(*b*) The custom of erecting statues, through flattery, and then, throwing them down, that, in pursuance of the same principles, they might raise others in their places, became so common, that, at length, they were contented to saw off the head of a statue and fix on the head of the new tyrant.

empty ostentation, and a mean presumption, which render these vices, thus odious in themselves, so particularly ridiculous. They debate, they wrangle, and they threaten; at length, this farce performed, even by fellow-citizens, is interrupted on the arrival of an officer, belonging to a neighbouring despot, who comes to deliver the commands of his master. Then, their language undergoes a thorough alteration. They bend, they cringe, they promise every thing; and this slave, this instrument of the tyrant is conducted back, laden with honours.

On the other hand, if any circumstance can administer consolation to the people, who live under an absolute government, it must arise from the consideration, that such a government is, at once, ancient and extensive. In the first instance, mankind, always led by custom and opinion, are easily induced to imagine that they who have governed them, during a long space of time, have, effectively, a right to govern them: in the second instance, despotism being, constantly and invariably, the work of force, the more the principle of this force is situated at a distance, the more is its activity impaired. Thus, se-

veral

veral provinces of the Ottoman empire, such as Dalmatia, Transilvania, Bosnia, still enjoy a kind of liberty.

Let us, then, call to our ideas, the fate of these vast regions of Asia; when they found themselves a prey to the first powerful warrior, who designed to invade them. I do not allude, merely, to Ptolemy, Cassander, Antigonus, and Eumenes, still shining with that lustre which they had borrowed from Alexander; all the little usurpers, who succeeded these princes, the kings of Bithynia, of Pergamus, of Cappadocia, of Pontus, &c. &c. must be included in the number. What motive, except fear, could have attached the people to such a form of government? and, what motive, except avarice, could have attached the prince to the people?

It was, in similar circumstances that Rome, the sovereign of Italy, and victorious in Africa, extended her ambitious views over the rest of the world. Surely the blood of two millions of men, spilt in the second Punic war,<sup>(c)</sup> and the yet recent recollection of the triumphs

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(c) I have been at the pains of calculating the number of men, which (as historians inform us) perished

triumphs of Hannibal might have inspired this nation with more pacific sentiments. What a favourable moment! had they but known how to have turned it to their advantage! had some new Cyneas entered into the senate, and spoken thus: "If, conscript fathers! at the time, when Romulus founded this city; or rather, when, after the expulsion of the kings, your generous ancestors called

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rished in the different wars, waged by the Romans, from the five hundred, and thirty-third year, after the foundation of Rome, to the year 577; that is forty-four years. This number amounts to 959,846. But historians have mentioned many of these battles, without specifying the losses on either side; so that one may add to this number, upwards of half as many more, at the least, which will make, nearly, 1,400,000 men: to which add several fleets sunk, and those who perished, either through disease, or misery, and the number will amount to more than two millions of men, all sacrificed in war, during a space of time, scarcely exceeding the length of life, usually allotted to every human creature, and including only half of that portion of time which is called the age of man. It must be farther observed, that this loss was by so much the greater, as it referred only to the free-men, who formed but a part of the general population. One may even presume that a greater number of slaves, attending the service of the army, underwent the same fate.

called you forth to the enjoyment of liberty, some divinely inspired man had arisen to declare to you, that the gods were resolved to render this blessing perpetual, all your wishes would have been accomplished, and you must have supposed yourselves the happiest of mortals. But, with what rivulets of blood, have you not been constrained to purchase this inestimable felicity! How much time have you not spent in fighting to defend it, without ever presuming that you could have reserved it for yourselves, unless you tore it from

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In these modern times when, as the poet ingeniously observes, we have "fitted murder to the rules of art," a military author asserts, that in a pitched battle every eighth man is either killed or wounded. If the fables, with which the history of the siege of Troy is interwoven, have not much weakened its credibility, we may perceive what a multitude of the human species were sacrificed during the few years continuance of a contemptible quarrel. In the war, between the Greeks and the Trojans, the former lost eight hundred and eighty-six thousand men; and the number of the slain, amongst the latter, amounted to six hundred, and sixty-six thousand men. All this for Helen; the wife, or rather the prostitute of five, at least; who was enjoyed by Theseus, Menelaus, Paris, Deiphobus, and Achilles; and who, at length, was hanged, in the isle of Rhodes, by the maid servants of Polixo. K.

from your rivals? yet such is the depravity of mankind, and such, in particular, was the barbarism of your neighbours, that, for a long period, to avoid oppression, it became necessary that you should oppress. I say, for a long period; because there is a point, at which states, strong within themselves, stand in no need of being aggrandized; then the spirit of conquest is no more than an abuse of the spirit of preservation. Thus, those inflaming liquors, which are designed to reanimate our debilitated strength, when taken to excess, infect us with illusory wants, and whilst they, always, seem to increase our vigour, lead only to annihilation. Be sure, therefore, O citizens! that you are not arrived at this point of power, the passing of which, is often dangerous and constantly unjust: you are obeyed by Italy; Africa is humbled; and Asia beholds you with respect: but Italy is depopulated; Africa is plunged in barbarism; and Asia groans beneath the yoke of slavery. Then, fertilize Italy, polish Africa, and give freedom to Asia. This is, undoubtedly, your duty: nay, I will go farther; it is your interest: and thus I prove it.

I perceive

I perceive but two objects to which your desire of making conquests can extend: either, you wish to enjoy, to a certainty, a lasting repose, and, in the place of enemies, to possess only subjects; or you are anxious to become rich, and, in endeavouring to accomplish this point, you are ready to plunder all other nations. If it be the duration of peace which you are eager to obtain, why do you not acquire, solely by policy, that which you expect from force? Can you believe that two or three legions are sufficient to subdue the people of Taurus, and of Caucasus? do you suppose that your proconsuls can preserve, for the republic, this empire, which the generals of Alexander could not preserve for themselves? how will you maintain discipline amongst your troops? how will you confine an army, accustomed to pillage, within proper regulations? how will you fix the obedience of a consul, instructed to go beyond your orders? but you fear Antiochus; but you fear Philip. Shall I, instantly, supply you with formidable armies, to keep these princes in awe? restore to Greece her ancient forms: re-establish the republican government in all Asia Minor: Philip shall tremble,



tremble, even in Macedon; and Antiochus shall be driven towards the center of Asia. You shall govern the world as you sit within the senate; and, without throwing aside your robes, you shall gain battles, in which, the earth shall not be drenched with the blood of the Romans.

Let us, now, suppose what, however, is far distant from my thoughts, that this fierce and warlike people, tired of the austerities of life, should demand from the universe the reward of their long labours. You, O Romans! may demand it. Your frugality and discipline may yet obtain for you that which will not fail to destroy both. Well then! be rich! I agree to it. But tell me; who will have a right to these riches? will they belong to the army, who bore them off? then, none, except the soldiers, could be happy, or opulent. Will they become the property of all the Roman people? but, if each citizen be rich, who will enlist himself amongst the legions? who will carry burdens? who will undergo long marches, and the fatigues of encampments? I foresee your intentions: you will keep foreigners in pay, who may go to war, in your place. And, will you then be  
rich

rich, whilst others are becoming strong? shall you continue free, whilst others remain in arms? believe me, O Romans, if you are weary of your ancient simplicity; if you, particularly, wish to be in possession of the fine arts, which ought to be the study of a great, and happy people, do not import statues, but statuaries; seize no more on pictures; but instruct painters. It is the enjoyment of our own workmanship, and not the enjoyment of the workmanship, which we may have taken from another, that proves so pleasing. Let me assure you, that the bread made of the grain, which you may have sown, will have a sweeter relish, than bread made of the corn of Ægypt; and the marble, which may have been hewn out under your own inspection, will be, in your imagination, a thousand times more precious, than the masterpieces of Phidias. Be then industrious, and politic cultivators; but above all, be just; for the order of the universe hath decreed, that the welfare of a small part of mankind cannot long remain in opposition to the welfare of the whole."

I know not if such a speech was ever made in the senate; but the truths which it con-

tains, are so striking, that the Romans, all intoxicated as they were with success, did not seem absolute strangers to the lessons, which it inculcates. After the battle of Cynocephalus, Quintus Flaminius proclaimed, throughout the cities of Greece, a decree of the Roman people, directing that they should be restored to their liberty. The excessive joy, with which this news was received, must naturally embitter our regret, when we observe that this apparent beneficence was only granted for a moment, to cast an additional horror, over the miseries, with which Greece was shortly afterwards loaded. In fact, it was not long, before the mask fell from the ferocious character of the Romans; and this implacable republic was seen to exercise a tyranny, till then, unknown. (*d*)

We have remarked, in the course of the preceding chapters, that the frequency of civil dissensions, amongst the governments of ancient Greece, became one of the greatest afflictions of humanity. We have observed that, whilst these principal republics, namely,

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(*d*) Inter impotentes, et vallidos, falsò quiescas. Ubi manû agitur, modestia, ac probitas nomina superioris sunt. Tacit. de. mor. Germ.

the republics of Athens, and of Sparta, interposed in the several disputes, and altered, according to their pleasure, the form of the government, such innovations were constantly sealed with the blood of a multitude of citizens. These massacres, however, bore the appearance of acts of justice, inflicted by the prevailing faction, which, then, became the legislative authority; whilst the vanquished party was treated like a rebellious confederacy. The Romans adopted a different principle. They concluded themselves to have been, apparently, born the masters of the world; and, in consequence of this supposition, they treated all other nations, not as conquered enemies, but as revolted subjects. This shocking principle, particularly, displayed itself in its blackest light, after the victory gained by Paulus Emilius.

Rhodes, a republic, flourishing with commerce, and with navigation; Rhodes, the precious remains of ancient Greece, perceived herself, because she had for a moment ceased from favouring the Romans, compelled to submit to an inquisition of their ambassadors, and threatened with a total destruction. She had no method of avoiding

this calamity, but by putting to death every one of her citizens, who had voted against Rome. Shortly afterwards, Bæbius, the lieutenant of Paulus Emilius, hurried away by a particular hatred, which he had conceived against some of the Etolians, ordered five hundred and fifty of the chief persons, amongst this unhappy people, to be slaughtered. But these abominable transactions were only the prelude to a series of cruelties, exercised by the Romans. The avarice and iniquity of individuals was soon blended with the barbarous maxims of the government. It is impossible to read the history of the war in Spain, without shuddering with horror. I do not, merely, allude to a Lucullus, who, introducing himself into a city, under the sanction of articles of capitulation, violated the faith of treaties, and put twenty thousand inhabitants to the sword; nor to a Galba, who, deceiving a whole nation, by a pretended peace, contrived to collect them together, like a herd of deer, within a proper inclosure, and massacre every one; nor to an Aquileius, who, the more easily to destroy those enemies, whom he durst not encounter, was base enough to poison all the springs in the province:

vince: a tear of more affecting sorrow trickles down my cheek, whilst I reflect on Scipio, the wise, the illustrious Scipio, who ordered his executioners to cut off the hands of four hundred young men, belonging to the little city of Lusia, whose only guilt was, the having assisted the Numantians, their allies. (e) No; to deny it, were a vain attempt. Such transgressions can never be stiled the crimes, either of a general, or of some few soldiers. A whole nation must have proved ferocious, to have been capable of producing

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such.

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(e) The learned reader, whilst he recollects the melancholy story of the Numantians, must pay a tribute of admiration, to the intrepidity of a little band of heroes, whom multitudes were unable to subdue; and who had the virtue to prefer death, within the arms of their expiring liberty, to a life of slavery, beneath the tyranny of the Roman yoke. Although their number was confined to four thousand men, yet they resisted, during fourteen years, the attacks of forty thousand soldiers. At length, when the severities of the famine, which raged within, had cut off every possibility of resisting the army, which endeavoured to destroy them, from without, they, nobly, raised a kind of funeral pile, with their effects, and casting themselves upon it, perished in the flames. The disappointment of Scipio, who saw no monuments of the glory of his conquests, except the bare walls, and the ashes of the dead, may account, but cannot apologize for his inhumanity. K.

such execrable villains, as the instruments of their barbarity. And what heart, but must be melted, at perceiving, almost in the same instant, two splendid cities, two wonders of the world, Carthage, and Corinth, reduced to ashes? in vain, did the past ages, in vain, did the whole world exert all their power, in the embellishment of these magnificent monuments of ancient felicity: *the majesty of the Roman people* required that they should be crumbled into dust. (f)

Nevertheless, the proconsuls, and the greedy prætors carry off those treasures, which the fire and the sword had spared. To have seen their warriors fall in battle; to have lost their forms of government, and their freedom, were but trifling afflictions to the people; the weight of impositions was added to the weight of slavery. A barbarous usury was practised by the extortioners themselves: the governors, and the collectors of the taxes were like so many crows, disputing about the carcases. But, if the oppressed universe cannot recover her ancient prosperity, at least, let her derive some consolation, from the  
hope

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(f) *Ecce quam feliciter Roma vincit, tam infeliciter quidquid extra Romam vincitur. Paul. Oros. l. 5.*

hope of vengeance. O Mithridates! O Viriatus! delay no longer your appearance! (g) Asia and Europe call upon you. Wait not, until these cruel conquerors shall have done justice on themselves; for, soon, abject slaves, infamous gladiators, a Trypion, and a Spartacus, shall be substituted to Carthage; and Numantia; and if, at length, they disappear, it will be only to give place to Marius, to

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Sylla,

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(g) The virtues, the abilities, and the fate of Mithridates are well known; but it is singular, that Ammianus Marcellinus should have been the only historian (Appian not excepted, the unwearied collector of almost every circumstance, relating to this unhappy prince) who hath recorded the peculiar conduct of Menophilus. When Manlius Priscus, in obedience to the orders, which he received from Pompey, commanded this eunuch to throw open the gates of the castle, and, with himself, deliver up the daughter of Mithridates, he first, stabbed her, and then, plunged the dagger into his own bosom, determined that neither should survive the fortunes of his master. . . . . Viriatus, in the earlier part of life, exchanged the peaceable employments of a shepherd, for the more active toils of hunting; he, became, at length, a public robber, and by a natural gradation, rose to the command of a formidable army. Ventidius, and Plancius fled before him; and Rome, beheld with terror, a chief, to whom all Portugal had submitted, when the sword of an assassin, by depriving him of life, accomplished that which the legions of the mistress of the world had vainly striven to effect. K.



Sylla, to Octavius, . . . . . But I stop short, and feel myself conscious, that whilst the object of my pursuit, is an enquiry into the condition of mankind, during this dreadful æra, I cannot, with such circumstances before me, support the calmness, so requisite in this discussion. *(b)* Must I, then, enter coldly into the detail of so many atrocious facts? and will it not be sufficient to excite the indignation of every feeling reader, if he be told to recollect, that, in a very short space of time, Carthage, Corinth, Numantia, and Athens were destroyed? that, without mentioning millions of men, who were slaughtered in Spain, in Africa, and in Asia; *(i)* the war of the slaves, in Italy, and Sicily only, was attended with the loss of one million of men; and that, in Italy, exclusively, three hundred thousand men, perished, during the war of the allies. Add to all this, proscriptions,

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*(b)* Cogit enim excedere propositi formam operis, erumpens animo, ac pectore indignatio. Velleius Paterculus. l. 2.

*(i)* It is well known, that Mithridates ordered a hundred and fifty thousand Romans, found within his state, to be destroyed on one day. This cruelty, all horrible as it appears, was yet no more than a reprisal for those injuries, which he had received from the Romans.

tions and civil wars. Remember, also, that Cæsar boasted of having either taken, or reduced eight hundred cities; subdued three hundred nations; engaged with three millions of men, a million of whom remained upon the field of battle, whilst another million were thrown into captivity. In short, recall to mind, the wars of Numidia; the punishment of Jugurtha; kings sunk into the condition of mere vassals; the people reduced to the most abject state of slavery; and you will, in few words, form an idea of the influence of the Roman people, over the happiness of mankind. (*k*)

## C H A P .

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(*k*) *Raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terræ, et mare scrutantur: si locuples hostis est, avari, si pauper, ambitiosi; quos non oriens, non occidens fatiaverit, soli omnium opes, atque inopiam pari affectu concupiscunt. Auferre, trucidare, rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant. Tacit. vit. Agric.*

## C H A P. VIII.

*Remarks on the state of the Roman empire,  
under the reigns of Augustus, and his successors.*

I Have, hitherto, only pointed out those horrible tragedies, those times of murder, and of carnage, when Rome, torn by civil discords, avenged, herself, the cause of the conquered nations, but oppressed them still more. This republic, at once victorious, and expiring, resembled a sick man, whose entrails are devoured by a burning fever, but whose arms, still robust, receive from the crisis of his pain, a more energetic, and more dangerous force. Whilst Cinna, and Marius were spilling the blood of the citizens, Sylla extirminated the inhabitants of Pontus, and  
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of Cappadocia; and whilst Octavius, and Lepidus, under the sanction of treaties, reciprocally sacrificed their parents, and their friends, (1) Anthony annoyed the Parthians, and the Ægyptians, with his military forces. During this disastrous epoch, the universe, every where, resounded with the clamours of rage, and the sighs of misery. Could there have been a picture, more afflicting to humanity, and, at the same time, more replete with consolations, for the present age? but as our aim is not so much to stir up the passions, as to ascertain their progress, and estimate their consequences, we shall not dwell upon facts, which the opinion of all mankind hath devoted to the horror of posterity. It is not so necessary to turn the human mind aside from the love of civil war, as from that vain enthusiasm of glory, that military, and conquering spirit, which only serves to sharpen

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(1) Ne quid ulli sanctum relinqueretur velut in dotem invitamentumque sceleris, Antonius L. Cæsarem avunculum, Lepidus Paulum fratrem proscripserant. Nec Planco gratia defuit ad impetrandum, ut frater ejus Plancus Plautius proscriberetur. Atque inter jocos militares qui currum Lepidi, Plancique secuti erant, inter execrationem civium usurpabant hunc versum? *de Germanis, non de Gallis duo triumphant Consules. Vell. Patere.*

during some time, those arms, with which the citizens are destined, one day, to murder each other. May we have accomplished this object in the foregoing chapters. May we, in the chapters which are to follow, adhere, invariably, to that coolness of discussion, which can, alone, convince, and those ingenuous sentiments, which can, alone, persuade!

A new question courts our examination. We have perceived, that all legislators, having been employed rather in rendering mankind powerful, than happy, the several people were, in their turn, either slaves or usurpers, without ever attaining to a permanent felicity. But, if the diversity of laws, interests, manners, and customs, was an insurmountable obstacle to a general peace, could there have been a surer method of uniting men, than by throwing them all into a state of subjection? could the repose of the world have been more firmly established, than under an universal monarchy? This question, in an age, when geography hath so enlarged the boundaries of the world, that we know of a single kingdom, more populous, and more extensive than the whole Roman empire, becomes absurd; but it is a question, which would have seemed plausible,

plausible, in the times of Augustus and Tiberius : nay, were it not to be taken in its full extent, there would be reason to suppose, that some stress might have been laid upon it, even in more modern times. It is certain that Philip the second never felt the necessity of drawing within his ambitious grasp, the empires of China, and of Russia. Fixed as he was, upon the throne of England, by his marriage with Mary, could he have rendered France subject to his dominion, the house of Austria must have proved the mistress of the whole christian world ; a sovereignty, likely, in the end, to have included the sovereignty of the universe. But Augustus found himself naturally situated in those circumstances, to which Philip would, willingly, have attained. If we except some barbarous nations, whom the Romans judged unworthy of being conquered, all the people, at that time known, were their tributaries, and Rome, become pacific, had banished war from the surface of the earth. The good order of administration was re-established ; justice resumed her rights ; and the polite arts, more attached to tranquility and plenty, than to vertue and liberty, soon deserted the porticos of Greece, to dwell  
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within the court of a magnificent, and enlightened despot. The reign of this prince would, doubtless, have proved the happiest æra for the Romans, could the beneficence of Augustus, have sunk in oblivion, the cruelty of Octavius. In fact, the hands, which scattered favours, were still tinged with blood, and the people, like soldiers, whom the fatigue of battle had overpowered with slumber, could only lie down to rest upon an heap of carcases. But it must also be observed, that, on the one hand, the citizens of Rome, alone, felt their happiness affected by this painful recollection; and that, on the other hand, the prostitution into which these very citizens had fallen, at once, deprived them of all resentment of injuries, and infected their minds with the meanest self-interest, and the most abject propensity to flattery. The individuals amongst the Romans, who had reason to weep over the loss of a father, or avenge the fate of a brother, enjoyed an ample satisfaction in the smiles of their prince, or in some empty title annexed to magistracy. Thus, the provinces rejoiced at this revolution of affairs, whilst Rome no longer possessed the merit of feeling it with concern.

Tiberius

Tiberius, equally inferior to, equally unworthy of his predecessor, by his vices, and even his virtues, was, for some time, capable of putting into practice the lessons which he had received from Augustus. The public happiness met with no disturbance, until the administration of Sejanus; and I am not surpris'd that so long a calm, before the breaking out of the political storms, should have given rise to the supposition, that an universal monarchy, or, at least, a monarchy, the extent, and preponderance of which, might be very great, would prove a particular advantage to mankind. Some authors, too fond of paradoxes, have even ventured to assert, that so constant a peace, had, sufficiently, indemnified the Romans, for the barbarities of Claudius, Caligula, and Nero; because that, in the times, when these monsters were glutting themselves with the blood of the senators, the people, at least, were happy and quiet. It would be easy to return them for answer, that, unless, by the word people, they mean what is commonly called the dregs of the people, that is, an abject mob, without property, and without abilities, it is exceedingly certain, that the Roman people underwent  
 great



great sufferings, during the reigns of those tyrants, who filled up the space, from Augustus to Vespasian. But, without dwelling on this particular question, which, surely, could never have been agitated in earnest, we will endeavour to estimate, as clearly as possible, that happiness, which the Romans are imagined to have enjoyed, under their emperors.

To take in the full scope of our design, some idea should be formed of the situation of the Romans, when Augustus, after the battle of Actium, remained the sole master of all. Rome was no longer, as formerly, the cradle of the kings of the world. The families which were become illustrious, by the melancholy fate of nations, had already expiated their ancient, and guilty splendor; and the inheritors of the most celebrated names had yielded up their necks to the executioners. Freed-men, or Burgeffes,<sup>(m)</sup> issuing

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(m) All the people of Italy were become citizens of Rome. In the reign of Claudius, this privilege was, at first, extended to the inhabitants of Transalpine Gaul, and, shortly afterwards, to all the provinces of the empire. It is necessary to read the speech, which Tacitus hath put into the mouth of Claudius, who, amongst

issuing from all the towns of Italy, had raised themselves on the ruins of the ancient houses; but these new citizens did not equal those citizens whom they replaced, either in birth, or in affluence: public parasites, destitute of all patriotic zeal, and having no concern in the management of affairs, came to Rome, that they might partake of the distributions of provisions, and money, which were kinds of temporary alms, dispensed by the orders of the sovereign; but particularly, that they might enjoy those long and magnificent fights, which, by amusing, turned aside their attention to their misfortunes. If some rich individuals still existed; they were not those great proprietaries, so respectable in all the states; but Proconsuls, Pretors, and Questors, who, by pillaging the provinces, were become opulent; and more especially, the Roman knights,<sup>(n)</sup> who having engrossed to them-

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amongst several other plausible reasons, produces the examples of the Athenians and Lacedæmonians, whose ruin, he attributed to that ridiculous jealousy, which prevented them from admitting strangers into the number of their fellow-citizens.

(n) Amongst the Romans, as amongst ourselves, there were but two sorts of nobility: the one sort seemed acknowledged

elves all the business of the finances, soon acquired immense fortunes in money; a manifest symptom of a state in her decline. The perplexity of Augustus, when he undertook  
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knowledged by the general opinion, and proceeded from the antiquity and dignity of families, honourable employments, military crowns, the images of ancestors, &c. (See Gravina de origine Juris). The other sort belonged to the constitution, and was that which conferred a real rank, by distinguishing the Patrician, and the Senators, from the Knights, and the Plebeians. Now, this last order of nobility was founded only in riches, in the Census. Thus, the classes, formerly instituted with a different intention, by Servius Tullius, were, by the lapse of time, unavoidably drawn into a contradiction, to the principles of the government, since they put men, who had, accidentally, made a fortune, and sometimes, even gamblers, on a footing with the citizen, sprung from the most illustrious parents, and enjoying the advantages of the best education. I am surpris'd that all authors, and, chiefly, Mr. de Montesquieu, should have paid so little attention to that similarity which exists in the condition of the nobility, amongst the Romans, and the nobility, amongst ourselves. He might have observed how, in all governments, and in all states, consequence is attached to affluence; and how impossible it is for fortune to dispense with consequence. In spite of the numerous satires, which the justice, the malignity, or the jealousy of the public, may have levelled against the receivers of the  
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to reform the senate, is well known. The greatest part of the younger branches of the most illustrious families, wanted the possessions necessary to qualify them for that order, and this prince was obliged to supply their

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kings revenues, they are become amongst us, what the Roman knights were at Rome, a class apart, deriving a consequence from their affluence. And this consequence would, doubtless, have become more considerable, and more marked, if the marriages of the rich heiresses, had not diverted the money from its original channel, and caused it to be scattered abroad and dissipated. No sooner did these Financiers become desirous of shining with a borrowed lustre, than they diminished the lustre which was peculiar to them. And yet, they not only form a class apart, as hath been already observed, but they recruit, as it were, the ancient nobility, which by degrees, become extinct, and make way for the modern nobility. Why the fortunes acquired by the adventurers in commerce, or the merchants, have not, like the fortunes acquired by the Financiers, established a new order of citizens, would be no incurious question. But, here, it cannot be resolved. I shall content myself with observing, first, that commerce is generally the most flourishing in democratical states. Secondly, that the individuals, who engage in commerce, are of a rank, too distant from the great, to endeavour to be assimilated with them. The commercial man avoids splendor. The Financier loves it, and finishes with the attainment of it.

exigencies with his bounty.<sup>(o)</sup> In spite of the admission of the people of Italy, to the privileges of citizens ; in spite of all those recruits so little worthy of the metropolis ; when Augustus, in the beginning of his reign, gave orders for the Census, the number of citizens did not exceed four millions, one hundred and sixty-three thousand ; the majority of which must have perished with famine, had they not partaken of the distributions of the sovereign.<sup>(p)</sup> Such were the masters of the world, or rather, such were the first slaves of Augustus ; without means, without property, transported from Calabria into Tuscany, and from Tuscany into Lombardy, just as it became necessary either to recompence some veteran soldiers, or to celebrate some illustrious names by establishing a colony ; these unhappy persons, always considered as strangers, even in Rome, strolled about under the porticos, and dwelled in cabbins.

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<sup>(o)</sup> Cæsar admitted such a number of strangers and new men into the senate, that an humorous edict was fixed up, in which were the following words in great letters : *all persons whatsoever are strictly commanded not to refuse shewing a senator the way to the senate.*

<sup>(p)</sup> See Dion.

Add to these, some Greek Rhetoricians, foreign adventurers, a multitude of slaves,(g) and a great number of gladiators, wrestlers, comedians, and prostitutes, and then, some idea may be formed of the situation of Rome, under her emperors.

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(g) The excess to which the custom of keeping a multitude of slaves, was, at that time, carried, might easily be ascertained; some judgement in this matter may be formed from the following circumstances. Pedanius Secundus was assassinated by one of his slaves; it was debated, whether, according to the laws, all those slaves, who were in the house, during the perpetration of the crime, should be sentenced to death. Caius Cassius voted for the question, and Tacitus, amongst other reasons, hath made him assign the following reason: quem numerus fervorum tuebitur, cum Pedanium Secundum quadringenti non protexerint? (see *Annal.* l. 14.) Pedanius had, at that time, four hundred slaves. It is impossible to read, without horror, that all these unfortunate wretches suffered death for the crime of a single man. Dion relates that Ægnatius Rufus boasted, during his Edileship, that he had extinguished a fire by the single assistance of his own slaves; Augustus, who was displeas'd with this magistrate, and who, besides, did not chuse that an individual should arrogate to himself the merit of having provided for the public quiet and welfare, set apart, for this employment, only, six hundred slaves, fallen to him by the succession of Agrippa. This immense body of slaves was rasher an alarming circumstance.

Tacitus

The provinces, long accustomed to the tyranny of the proconsuls, the avarice of the questors, and the usury of the Roman knights, had every reason to regard the establishment of good order, throughout all the departments of administration, as an advantageous circumstance. But this was but a temporary blessing,

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Tacitus (l. 4.) in relating to us, that under the reign of Tiberius, it was, for a moment, apprehended that they might revolt, hath taken care to acquaint us, that this report had spread terror through Rome: *ob multitudinem familiarum quæ gliscebant immensum minore in dies plebe ingenua.* In the letter, which Tiberius wrote to the senate, concerning the complaints which had been made against luxury, we find these remarkable words: *quid enim primum prohibere, et priscum ad morem recipere adgrediar? villarum infinita spatia? familiarum numerum, et nationes?* (Tac. ann. l. 3.) Treinshemius explains the term, *nationes*, by observing, that the Romans had so great a number of slaves, that they distinguished them by nations, Justus Lipsius, also, cites on this subject, a passage from Pliny, who observes that one Nicilius Isidorus kept five thousand slaves: he, likewise, produces another quotation from Athenæus, in which the number of slaves, belonging to some of the Romans, is estimated, even at thirty thousand. (See Tacit. Varior. l. 3.) I shall conclude this note with observing, that in the same letter alluded to above, Tiberius declares that the prevalence of corruption, amongst the Romans, is not astonishing, since they only formed a mixture of every kind of nations,

blessing, their condition became better, but their state was not changed. We know that, even during the reign of Augustus, some of the pretors were guilty of a barbarous abuse of that arbitrary power, which had been entrusted within their hands. Dion informs us that one Licinius, in the course of the year, impudently extorted from the Gauls, fourteen instead of twelve months tribute; but this act, the violence of which was far from being without examples, must appear to us, in a more shocking light, when considered as a species of rapine, exercised by the government. In fact, Licinius, who had the presence of mind to offer Augustus, the money which he had exacted, found no difficulty in persuading him, that a double use might arise from plundering the Gauls of their treasures, and throwing them into the coffers of the emperor. As this fact hath reached posterity, one may naturally suppose that many other similar facts have perished in oblivion. The complaints of the unhappy are not preserved so long as the panegyrics of orators. And what must have been the condition of a people, governed by two foreigners, who, with the titles of proconsul, and questor,



were reciprocal spies, or accomplices in the same crimes; who could neither have played into each others hands, without ruining the province, nor have engaged in mutual opposition, without scattering through the same province, trouble and confusion?<sup>(r)</sup>

But, however strict the integrity of these magistrates might have been, the number, and even the mode of the taxes, were sufficient to reduce the people to the greatest distress. The human mind, always fertile in inventions, had already concerted those numerous impositions, which are the scourges of our contemporaries; and the ingenious author,<sup>(s)</sup> who hath proved that almost all the discoveries, attributed to the moderns, are owing to the ancients, might have added to the examples, which he hath produced, in support of his assertion, the long-since invented

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<sup>(r)</sup> Tacitus (Vit. Agric.) hath taken care to transmit to us the complaints of the Britons, against the Roman government. *Singulos sibi olim reges fuisse, nunc binos imponi; equibus legatus in sanguinem, procurator in bona faviret: æquè discordiam præpositorum, æquè concordiam subjectis exitiosam, &c.*

<sup>(s)</sup> Mr. Du Tens.

vented art of working a province with taxes, or rather of working a people with taxes.(1)

Whilst the frontiers were galled by the payment of tributes, and harrassed by the presence of armies, they felt the additional misfortune of being frequently exposed to the incursions of the enemy. In fact, although Augustus was not engaged in any very calamitous wars; and although the centre of the empire was at peace, yet the Germans, the Rhetians, the Pannonians, and the Cantabrians, were constantly committing great disorders, and exercising much cruelty, not only against the Romans, but against their allies; for such were the extent and the fortune of this empire, that all who were neither allied

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(1) L'Abbé du Bos hath proved that the emperors levied from their subjects, but particularly, from the Gauls, taxes of every kind, such as a tithe of fruits, in the conquered lands, and farmed under the name, Decuma: a fifth of all the productions not sown, whether of wood, vines, meadows, &c. A general land-tax, or if it be a more proper expression, an acre-tax, called jugeratio; a capitation, or personal tax, paid by every freeman; and in short, the duties of the customs, on exportation, and importation; the fortieth penny on effects sold, &c. &c. (See l'histoire de l'établissement de la Monarch. Franc. Chap. 11. 12. 13. Tom. 1, Liv. 1.)

allied to, nor tributaries of the Romans; composed a barbarous people, at once lawless and unpolished.

This induces us to extend our reflections still farther, and endeavour to form some estimation of the state of the known world, at that period. It is but too true that we perceive upon this vast theatre, merely a debased, indolent, and frivolous people; (u) kingdoms converted into oppressed and languishing provinces; and, at a greater distance, barbarous nations, equally ignorant of commerce, and of agriculture, and existing only in a state of war. Where is the philosopher who can, at any time, be led to envy those, whom fate had destined to live, during this æra? but, let us, instead of loitering over these general views, follow the history with a closer step.

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(u) The Romans had, from the beginning of the civil wars, so entirely neglected agriculture, that Augustus was induced, in order to re-establish it, to curtail the distributions of corn, amongst the people, since they exempted them from the necessity of cultivating the earth: but Suetonius pretends that he was deterred, by the apprehension that, one day, the re-establishment of this custom, might prove too great an opening to ambition, and too easy a step to the attainment of popularity.

It is certain that Augustus was a pacific prince; and yet his legions were almost constantly engaged in war; his friends, his children were scarcely to be found, but at the head of the armies; and even he, in spite of old age, in spite of his aversion to a martial life, was frequently obliged to undertake long voyages, that he might be at hand, to direct the military operations. Did not the revolts of the Germans, the Cantabrians, and the other people above-mentioned, keep the Roman forces, always, in action? and was not the beginning of the reign of Tiberius disturbed with the din of battle? it is certain that all this never reached Rome; but what is Rome, when compared with the universe? besides, if even Augustus, seated within the very bosom of fortune, lamented over the death of a son, who perished miserably amidst foreign wars, is it possible to believe that the inhabitants of Rome were happier, than he was? can we suppose that the defeat of Varus, and the bloody victories of Agrippa, of Drusus, and of Germanicus, had not often proved the cause of mourning, in the most illustrious families? we must not judge of the Augustan age, by the works of  
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contemporary poets ; but had the fine verses of Horace and of Virgil expressed the sincere meaning of the heart, no more could be gathered from this circumstance, than that the artists, and the men of letters enjoyed a state of welfare ; or rather, that the happiness, which they celebrated, like the rays of the sun, after a storm, owed a great part of its value to those horrible moments, which preceded it ? and what dependance could have been placed on this felicity, the only basis, the only support of which, were the days of an old man ? who, possessed of any feeling but must have trembled, when he reflected that Tiberius, and Posthumus Agrippa, were the nearest heirs to the throne ? After the sacrifices which had been made to Augustus, what resource remained against his successors ? woe to the people, who have been subdued by enthusiasm ! forgers of their own chains, they have contrived to fit them on in such a manner as to render it almost impossible that they should be broken ; as if it were necessary, in exchange for benefits, to supply a king with power ; and whilst we are rewarding a good prince, to make preparations for a tyrant. Monarchy, like nobility,

ity, which is the support of monarchy, to be respectable, should be ancient. From a fortunate experience of authority, and from a settled habit of obedience, may arise a kind of constitution, which, in the end, becomes almost unalterable: because there is a point, beyond which the materials of a republic, exist no longer in a monarchy, whilst the materials of a monarchy, exist always in a republic.

There is but little room to doubt that the Romans gave way to some reflections, such as these; and although the majority suffered themselves to be seduced, as much by the dignities which Augustus lavished on them, as by that resemblance of a republic, which he still preserved, yet they could not avoid foreseeing what happened afterwards: but such was the artifice which prevailed in the conduct of this fortunate usurper, that good and evil, hope and fear, the empty name and the reality were so happily blended, and so judiciously counter-ballanced, that the Romans remained in that divided state, which leaves more room for doubts and fears, than for confidence and resolution. I insist the more particularly on this epoch of the reign  
of

of Augustus, because the mere names of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, are sufficient to strike horror into every feeling heart. No one is so barbarous, as not to deplore the fate of those unhappy wretches, who lived under these execrable reigns; and yet they were reigns, which, of all others, made the least shew of war.<sup>(x)</sup> If war was, sometimes, kindled in Britain, or towards Armenia, the center of the empire scarcely knew any thing about it; but that kind of bloody peace which prevailed must frequently have become a motive for regretting the horrors of battle. The death of Nero brought trouble and confusion back into the bosom of Italy; and the engagements between the armies of Otho, and Vitellius, and of Vespasian and Galba, again drenched in human gore, those fields, which, since the battle of Mantua, had never resounded with the din of arms. Vespasian established peace in the empire: but his reign is precisely the reign which presents us with a picture of all the most

shocking

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(x) Tacitus, on the subject of the legions, which Corbulo led into Armenia, saith: *fatis constitit fuisse in eo exercitu veteranos qui non stationem, non vigiliis inissent.* Tac. ann. l. 13.

shocking circumstances, which have, at any time been produced by ambition, on the one, and fanaticism, on the other hand. It may easily be guessed, that I allude to the war of the Jews, in which, during the space of two years, more than thirteen hundred thousand souls perished; and which, rekindled under Trajan, and under Adrian,<sup>(y)</sup> occasioned the total destruction of fifty fortified cities, and nine hundred and eighty-five boroughs, or villages. This horrible scourge of humanity too much outweighed the advantages, which arose in the reign of Vespasian. Titus can only be said to have just seated himself on the throne. It seems as if that destiny, which had formed him a pattern for succeeding kings, was contented with barely shewing him as an eternal example to every future age. I shall not mention Domitian, whom a series of cruelties have rendered too notorious; but I must observe that

Trajan,

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(y) If Xiphilinus, the abridger of Dion, may be credited; this revolt of the Jews was attended with the loss of two hundred thousand men at Cyrene; and two hundred and fifty thousand men in the Isle of Cyprus. The cruelties which this historian imputes to the Jews, make the hair stand on end, and are scarcely credible.



Trajan, whose virtues, and whose goodness should have proved the delights of the Roman people, disturbed, of his own accord, by a passion for war, the serenity of those happier days, to which he had given birth. This observation becomes more considerably important, since it enables us to estimate the morality of this age. I repeat it: I shall frequently have occasion to repeat it: a love for their country, popularity, and generosity, were virtues common to the ancients; but true philanthropy, a regard for public welfare, and general order, are sentiments, to which the past ages were absolutely strangers. And how, indeed, could such sentiments have existed amongst men, accustomed from their infancy, to behold thousands of gladiators, mutually slaughtering one another, and perishing even amidst the acclamations of the women? such exalted feelings as these could never have animated a people, who so frequently saw prisoners of war, chiefs and kings publicly conducted, in pursuance of a decree, to execution, and completing, by their deaths, the festivity of a triumph. It must be confessed that virtue hath been, in every æra, what beauty still is, amongst different nations;

nations; not that which nature hath produced the most perfect, but the greatest perfection of features which she may have given to each nation, and in each climate. As in the antique statues, the countenances of a Venus, or an Helen, preserve a certain expression of austerity, in our eyes, extremely inconsistent with those graces diffused through other forms, so the virtues of the ancients were continually tinged with the vices of their age.(z)

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(z) I have, hitherto, neglected to observe, that the Romans were so rigorous, in all their criminal prosecutions, as never to suppose that the number of the guilty could suggest a reason why any should be pardoned. Seneca relates, that Volusius Messala, having ordered three hundred men, to be beheaded, on one day, boasted of his conduct, and thought the perpetration of this barbarity a truly royal action. When Claudius exhibited that remarkable spectacle, on the Lacus Fucinus, there were more than nineteen thousand criminals all doomed to death; as may be seen in a passage which Suetonius hath transmitted to us. This author saith, that all these unfortunate wretches cried out to the emperor, as they passed before him: ave imperator, morituri te salutant; and that Claudius answering, from absence of mind, avete vos, they understood this expression to mean a pardon, and would

not

If Trajan and Marcus Aurelius have been blamed for engaging too much in war, yet, it must be confessed, that many reasons may be alledged in their favour. In fact, if we examine the constitution of the empire of the Cæsars, and the slight basis on which their authority rested, we shall be convinced, that it was almost impossible to maintain peace at home, but by waging war abroad. War is, unfortunately, a great mean of government, it employs every mind, it reduces all forms into one plain system, and keeps each dis-

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not engage, until they had been compelled to it, by threats and intreaties. Mr. Crevier (*Hist. des Emp.*) observes on this occasion, that it was an astonishing circumstance that nineteen thousand criminals should be found in the Roman empire, worthy of death, unless they had collected them, for some time before, from all the provinces of the empire. . . . But, we know that the Romans had but too many resources, wherewith to supply their sanguinary amusements. Prisoners taken in war, foreigners condemned for different crimes, and more particularly the slaves, served as food for their cruelty. The barbarous power which they exercised over these last, is well known, and we may recollect an horrible instance, from the unfeeling malignity of Vedius Pollio, who, because a slave broke a glass, would have thrown him, even in the presence

of

cussion at a distance. I am, also, exceedingly inclined to believe, that those kings, who were always the most engaged in war, were not the kings who stood in the greatest need of genius; and that politic princes are as much superior to martial princes, as the art of governing is more difficult, than the art of commanding. The emperors, situated between the people, and the army, but more embarrassed by the last, ought to have desired war, that they might have employed the one, and amused the other. And yet a

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single

of Augustus, to some sea monsters, which he kept in a pond. It may be, that these examples of inhumanity were uncommon; but it is at least apparent that a generally established custom required that all fugitive slaves should be exposed to wild beasts.

Amidst so many atrocious actions, of which the Romans were guilty, the greatest reproach which they have incurred, is, in my opinion, on account of their having never treated man, in general, as a kind of fellow creature. The extreme rigour of their punishments might, perhaps, have been excusable, had it been founded on a love of order, and had it been extended, with equal severity, against all. But who will not be surpris'd, at perceiving that these sanguinary judges inflicted no other punishment, but the punishment of sending into exile, on a Roman citizen, even although he might have committed a thousand assassinations.

single obstacle defeated the effect of this policy. The Romans were too superior to other states, the frontiers of the empire were too distant, and the neighbouring nations were too intimidated; it, therefore, became necessary to go far off, in search of war, and, then, the absence of the master, of course, diminished his power. Besides, such is the misfortune entailed on a people, entirely military, that in the case, where war is so distant, that the interior quarters do not feel its consequences, it will cease to be interesting, and its successes will become matters of indifference, whilst its losses will be the more bitterly felt. Even the common soldier grows fatigued, when toiling, without one object in his view; he mutinies, and revolts. If there be two armies, two parties are formed. Fresh dangers may arise from the valour of the officers, and the confidence of the forces. They can no more remain attached to their chief, without raising him to the first rank; and the love of the soldiers soon induces the generals to prove faithless; thus a misfortune must spring out of one of these three circumstances. If war be disadvantageous, it brings on the ruin of a nation: if it maintain only

an equal opposition to the contending powers, it harrasses, and drains a nation ; and if it be advantageous, it introduces a dissolution of the armies, and of the government. I have not yet mentioned the danger which may accrue from particular bodies, such as the Pretorian guards, the Janissaries, the Strelitzes, &c. because all my readers well know that every despot hath his satellites, and that each of these satellites are, in their turns, the tyrants of the despot. Amongst three and twenty emperors, sixteen were slaughtered, (a)

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(a) It is remarkable that, out of forty-two emperors, who filled up the interval, between Julius Cæsar and Charlemagne, thirty, at least, died a violent death. Amongst these, four committed suicide ; and six perished through the intrigues of their favourites, their brothers, their wives, and their children. It is not their dreadful dismissal to eternity, but their fatal entrance into the world, at which the feeling reader will be apt to shudder. The pen which writes the annals of the generality of kings, should, with propriety, be dipped in blood. A multitude of those monarchs, whom the fear, and adulation of their subjects, have dignified with the titles of fathers of their country, were little better than the murderers of mankind. If their contemporaries durst have spoken their sentiments with the same freedom, which hath influenced the opinion of their

the Roman empire was put up at auction, and sold to a contemptible individual; the revolutions of Russia, of the empire of the Ottomans, and of that of the Mogul, are ample proofs that a government, founded in military despotism, is the worst government of all, not only for princes, but for the people.

## SECTION

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their posterity, the compositions of too many of our ancestors, instead of being sullied with panegyrics on royalty, would have glowed only with execrations against the flagrancy of arbitrary power. K.

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SECTION II.

*Considerations on the lot of Humanity,  
during the middle ages of history.*

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CHAP. I.

*On the inundation of the Barbarians.*

**W**HILST we pursue our task of describing the misfortunes of mankind, we cannot observe, without concern, the diversity prevailing through the several objects which claim our attention. Evil is produced, and generated under a thousand different forms; and, without being hurried away by too splenetic an imagination, we may venture to

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assert



assert that, of all the presents which were made to human nature, the box of Pandora was, indisputably, the most complete, and the most judiciously assorted. The theatre of the world must now undergo a considerable alteration. In the place of either those rigid old men, who, seated on their curule chairs, decided, in three words, the destruction of states; or of those young enthusiasts, who, for a crown of grass, carried fire and the sword to the extremities of the earth, we shall perceive a race of half-savages, a wandering multitude of Barbarians, (b) who, notwithstanding, more just and more considerate than the first, felt only those passions, to which their wants had given birth, and became the masters of the world, solely, because they were perishing with hunger.

From

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(b) (*Hordes.*) This expression is applicable to those large bodies of emigrants, those societies of wandering Tartars, who, like the ancient Scythians, exist only in tents, in order the more conveniently to change their abode, whensoever the provisions of the country become nearly consumed. Each troop of these emigrants formerly consisted of fifty, or sixty families, under the command of a captain, dependant on the general, or prince of the whole nation. K.

From whence came these people, known only by their invasions? how did it happen, that all unpolished, and divided as they were, they attained to the power of overthrowing that wonderful Colossus, the Roman empire? (c) these are two important questions. The invest-

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(c) The rise and fall of Empires may be ranked amongst those events which, although common, do not cease to be remarkable. Inspiration only could have discovered, that the primitive Romans, a vile, and abject people were destined to clear the path, which conducted their future race to the sovereignty of the world. If, in the days of Julius Cæsar, a Roman Augur had pretended, that his *birds* informed him, that the distant descendants of the dictator, and his *invincible* countrymen, should be emasculated, and sing upon a stage, before the posterity of the conquered Britons, instead of being revered as a prophet, he would have been stoned, as a madman. Yet this, and stranger things than this have happened. To what fate England, the envy, and admiration of every kingdom upon earth, may be reserved, it is impossible to determine: but an ingenious writer of essays, a Colman, or a Wharton, by pursuing this thought, might, at once, amuse and instruct. A picture of England, sunk into what Rome is at present, blended with the representation of an American colony, superior in power and splendour, to her unnatural mother, can, in this age, only be ideal; but the future reality is, to the full as probable, as was the destruction of Rome, by the Barbarians, in the boasted reign of Augustus. K.

investigation of one question is the province of erudition; the investigation of the other question is the province of the science of politics. To discuss them might seem a striking instance of temerity, on our part, if experience had not convinced us, that a little philosophy can, sometimes, throw a light over the most intricate researches, and relieve us from the toils of learning. Let others display a vain, unnecessary parade of knowledge: we shall content ourselves with confessing our ignorance of the history of that vast region of the world, which contains Sweden, Russia, Poland, Tartary, China, and Indostan. Now who can inform us, if the emigrations into the West did not originate from the North, and the East? amongst the people, who inhabited Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland, there were but very few supposed to be indigenous.(d) The majority of them came from a greater distance, but they were not known until after their last establishment.

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(d) There are very strong proofs, that all these people came from Scythia. The celebrated Odin had conquered all the northern countries. See *Introduction à l'hist. du Dannemark.*

Were these people repulsed, towards the West, by the Tartarian and Chinese nations? or, did they not extend themselves into the vicinity of the Roman empire, by reason of too numerous a population? or, may we not rather suppose, that the world, becoming peopled, only by succession, the countries nearest to the sea, were, at the first, inhabited by a larger proportion of individuals, than the inland countries; from whence it must have followed, that an equilibration could never have been established amongst them, the progress of one part of these individuals, exactly corresponding with the decline of the other part.

The multiplication of questions, is the multiplication of doubts. First, supposing that the barbarous nations had been repulsed towards the West, in consequence of those unfortunate wars, which raged within the Eastern quarters, it must be very astonishing, that there should have been no tradition preserved, relative to these events. Secondly, although it be generally allowed, that the women in Germany are more prolific than elsewhere, we do not perceive that this circumstance

cumstance extends farther to the North ; or that Sweden and Russia have any reason to boast of the same fecundity. Thirdly, there is no absurdity in admitting, that the population of the world was, as yet, progressive, in those early times ; and that the effect of a long series of ages was universally manifested, almost at the same instant. But, is it necessary to suppose, that the population amongst the Barbarians, and, particularly, amongst the inhabitants of the North, was so numerous ? let us see what dependance can be drawn from the calculations of historians. Shall we attempt to sife with them ? whenever I read in their works, that this emperor attacked the Barbarians, and destroyed one hundred thousand men ; that another emperor defeated two hundred thousand Goths ; and that a third emperor vanquished three hundred thousand Sarmatians, I always translate these passages, thus : such an emperor attacked the Barbarians, and destroyed a great multitude. What ! if, in our times, when the military state of each nation, is printed and published, we can never exactly ascertain, the number of the forces of our enemies, or  
even

the number of the forces of our allies, shall we pretend to reckon up the forces of the Barbarians, who had no muster-rolls, no divisions of troops, nor any other method of marching, but in multitudes? it is, indeed, impossible to avoid wondering at the confidence with which historians transmit their details to posterity. Had they not been obliged to furnish out the greater part of their annals with materials, taken from the compositions of the orators and panegyrists, how could they have expected, that the Romans themselves should have known the number of the forces of their enemies? is it not evident that either fear or vanity magnified every object; that, in order to scatter terror through the ranks of the enemy, it was customary to speak of the strength of their own army, as greater than it was; and that, when they had been defeated, it was equally usual, to represent the strength of the opposing army, as less than it was, that the disgrace of having been conquered, might admit of some extenuation? besides, no province, whether in Germany, in France, or in Spain, is so poor, as to prove incapable of  
exciting

exciting the fears of neighbouring provinces, were all its inhabitants to take up arms, at once: and these apprehensions must have been still more violent, at a time when there were no military fortresses, to serve as barriers, of which the assailants could not have possessed themselves, but by dint of skill, toil, and perseverance.

The custom which these barbarous nations had adopted, of transporting themselves, to a man, from one climate, into another climate, seems, at the first glance, a more astonishing circumstance, than any of the former circumstances. And yet, if we do but reflect, we shall be no longer surprized at reading, in the pages of history, a relation of similar events, which happened at a period, much less remote from our own times. It is not a great while, since we became acquainted with the interior parts of America; and we know that the nations which inhabit them have undergone the like revolutions. It is, still, extremely common, to observe the savages, settling themselves in places, five, or six hundred leagues distant from their original abode. Such, at this period, is the  
fate

fate of the Tartars; and such will always be the destiny of those people, who remain absolute strangers, to the arts of agriculture. This, then, is the important speculation, on which we are to fix: if we desire to know what, in general, is the condition of the inhabitants of the world, we need only inform ourselves, whether the number of cultivated lands be augmented, or diminished.

However simple this method of investigating our subject may appear, we dare venture to assert, that it is not without its novelty; a novelty, arising from the contempt, with which such discussions have been treated by all those political enthusiasts, who were only led aside by a vain glory, or a false virtue; forms, at once, gigantic and frivolous, incapable of existing, but by mutually supporting each other, and making humanity a constant victim to their connexion.

We have, already, observed how the arts, commerce and agriculture became, as it were, a constituent part of Ægypt, of Phenicia, and at length of Greece, spreading themselves, as they constantly kept near to  
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the sea-shore, through Italy, Sicily, the coasts of Africa, Spain, and even amongst the Gauls. This consideration may serve to explain the reason, why the nations, bordering on the ocean, always enjoyed more distinguished advantages, than the nations inhabiting the inland countries. In fact, whilst Lycurgus, Solon, Romulus, and the rest, were putting their invention to the torture, that they might discover the art of effectually vanquishing their neighbours, nature, by slow degrees, conducted her rebellious children to that point, whereto she incessantly tends, by a progress, at once, secret and undisturbed. Whilst agriculture increased the productions of the earth, commerce was taught to negotiate their exchange; and as a river, when issuing from its bed, first overflows its banks, and then, divides its waters into different channels, bending its course through every convenient winding; so these useful discoveries extended themselves from the sea-coasts into the places more immediately within the reach of commerce, and from thence, into the inland countries. Thus, it may be said that riches and industry made the first advances, and went in quest of the Barbarians,  
before

before this people began to covet them. What, then, must have happened, if the perverseness of mankind, but, more particularly, the perverseness of heroes, and legislators, had not intruded itself to interrupt the order of nature? the industrious nations would, by little and little, have mixed themselves amongst other nations, either by commerce, or by alliance; nay, even by war, since, if, of two contending powers, the one power be more civilized than the other power, only the most stupid pride and the most misguided policy, can hinder the conquerors from either adopting the manners of the conquered, or imparting to them their own manners. Unfortunately the philosophers had so much understanding, the chiefs so much heroism, and the people so much vertue, that all, over the surface of the globe, was in a flame, whilst the perfection of human nature was thrown back to an extreme distance. An ignorant people, entirely destitute of laws, and strangers to cultivation, soon triumphed over the compatriots of Homer, of Plato, and of Lycurgus. They undertook to draw out their empire to a greater extent, than that extent which the

empire of manners and legislation had been able to reach: but quickly corrupted, divided and enfeebled, they preserved no traces of their ancient splendor, except those atrocious principles which they had derived from it; and at a time when they were no longer capable of quelling a revolt, their conduct invited it to break out. The barbarous nations found themselves, during that period, in a singular situation. Within the vicinity of opulence, and repulsed by a power who left them no share of it, they eagerly wished for all the softness of luxury, whilst they dreaded lest they should fall victims to oppression. There was no hope of those federal alliances, those intermarriages of sovereign houses, which tended to assimilate and unite the neighbouring nations. In the place of the ancient apothegm, introduced by Cato; *delenda est Carthago*, there was reason to substitute; *delenda est Roma*: and, in fact, Rome was, already, destroyed; the senate was filled with foreigners; the Barbarians commanded an army almost entirely composed of Barbarians. The Pretorians, invincible tyrants in the capital, but pusillanimous citizens in the camp, after having creat-

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ed and assassinated emperors, were compelled to give the precedency to the Germans and to the other foreigners, whom the Cæsars had appointed to form their guards. These Barbarians, admitted into the first rank, established with their own nations a correspondence which became pernicious to the Romans; they fixed their eyes on this degraded state, in proportion to its becoming forgetful of itself: the ambition of particular individuals preceded the ambition of the people; the chief employments were invaded, and even the throne was usurped in such a manner, that the Barbarians may be said to have conquered the empire before they attacked it.

From hence, it follows that we must seek for the sources of the invasions of the Barbarians, hitherto so difficult to be ascertained, in the atrocity of the ancient principles of the republic; in the vices peculiar to the modes of government, adopted by the emperors; and, especially, in the vast extent of their dominions. But, whatsoever may have been the cause of these invasions, it will always remain an incontrovertible point, that they ought to be regarded, as some of the most

bitter calamities, which ever afflicted human nature. The numerous and bloody battles, which they have occasioned, may be referred to those first principles of war, described at the beginning of this work; the desire of quitting a rigorous climate, for a more wholesome climate; a barren land, for a more fertile land, &c. Now, wars of this kind are the most cruel and disastrous; not being so much the contention of rival warriors, as the obstinate opposition of one nation against another nation. On the one hand, the impossibility of drawing off, and on the other hand, the necessity of preserving the means of subsistence, render the destruction of the enemy a necessary consequence of victory. What can be more melancholy and disquieting, than the picture of humanity, during the times, which preceded the separation of the Roman empire? nations destroyed through principles of policy: other nations overwhelming and laying waste whole countries; and a third assemblage of nations, more dangerous than the former, existing, solely, by acts of theft and piracy; the emperors transplanting whole colonies from Germany, into  
Britain;

Britain; from Asia, into Africa; and from Africa, into Europe. The universe resembled one vast field of battle, where the bodies of forces, not employed in fight, are engaged in continual evolutions, and, incessantly, change their ground.(e)

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(e) These frequent emigrations, these perpetual changes in the establishment of nations, were, after the war, amongst the greatest misfortunes, entailed on human nature. Let the reader judge from the following circumstances. Probus, unable to keep the Barbarians, in a state of peace, resolved to transplant several nations, into the lands belonging to the empire. Only one colony succeeded. It was composed of a hundred thousand of the Bastarnæ, a people of Scythia, who had settled in Thrace. The Gedinians, the Vandals, and the Franks could not be prevailed on to fix themselves, but committed their usual acts of plunder, in the places, where it had been attempted to establish them. It became necessary to destroy them, by force of arms. Dioclesian transported, into Pannonia, the Carpians, inhabiting the vicinities of the Pontus Euxinus; and Constantius Chlorus made the Batavians pass into the most depopulated provinces of Gaul. The manner in which they waged war against these Barbarians may be discovered, in a passage, from Vopiscus, who informs us, that the emperor Probus, not contented with having slaughtered, in one battle, four hundred thousand Barbarians, consisting of Burgundians, Franks, and Germans, set a price upon the heads

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**C H A P. II.**

*The first appearance of Christianity. The political, and moral state of Paganism, at the era of the establishment of the Christian religion.*

**T**HE dreadful convulsions, which shook the political system of the world, were not sufficient to fill up the measure of calamity. A revolution, a thousand times more astonishing, prepared itself to overthrow the empire of opinion; as if the time had been arrived

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heads of all who remained, promising to each of the soldiers a piece of gold, for every head which they might bring. It is with singular satisfaction, that I draw the contrast to these cruel orders, whilst I mention what I recollect to have seen practised, during the last war. Some commanders of light troops, anxious to prevent

rived, at which, every thing on the surface of the earth was to be altered, from the power which commands, to the persuasion, which governs. A tumultuous war arose in the mind; nor did the individual, who had retired to solitude, and contemplation, enjoy more tranquility in his retreat, than the unruly soldier, or the timid cultivator of the ground. What an epoch was this, in which history, at once, presents to us the destruction of the Roman empire, and the fall of paganism! new people, and a new mode of worship are introduced upon the theatre of the world; it may even be said, that a new religion is introduced; for, idly would men alledge, that christianity, teaching, as its first dogma, the unity of God, and immediately deriving itself, from the faith of the Israelites, should trace its origin up to deism and judaism: the mystery of the redemption,

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prevent the spilling of too much blood, concerted a struggle, in the minds of the soldiers, between avarice and cruelty, and instituted a reward, for every one, who might bring in a prisoner, safe and sound. Such is the progress of manners and philosophy, that the moderns, at this period, are not so cruel, in the time of war, as the ancients were, in times of peace,



its tenets relating to a future state, its forms of worship, its precepts, all announce, all declare a new order in spiritual matters; all characterise a revolution in the system of religion.

But, howsoever this subject ought to be considered, there is only one method of enquiry, with which we can indulge ourselves; and this method necessarily enters into the plan of our work. Thus, far from following the example of some philosophers, of the present age, whose abilities we respect, but whose fondness for discussion hath, perhaps, led them into errors, we shall leave to Theologians, that which belongs incontestably to their province, and enter solely into an examination of the influence of the Christian religion over the happiness of mankind, in its exclusive relation to this life. It is in consequence of this principle, that, being obliged, through the series of our reflections, to unfold the origin and progress of christianity, we shall only mention those human means, of which providence hath made use; to these means the fathers of the church have given their assent; and in this investigation no other means can be admitted, since it is impossible

possible for man, to trace the ways of God through supernatural events; and equally as difficult, for our weak intellects, to assign a motive, why he sometimes changes the order of nature; as to explain the reason, why he doth not change it, either oftner, or in a manner more adapted to the attainment of those ends, to which, we imagine, that he directs his purposes. If, in the course of this work, we have never assumed that stile of confidence, which pretends to teach; but rather the language of criticism, at once, doubting and discussing, how much more necessary is it, that we should adhere to this precaution, in a matter, where we cannot boast of having availed ourselves of any assistance, except that assistance which arose from the light of history, supported by reflection.

Whilst mankind meditated upon this great revolution in the moral world, they appear to have been particularly stricken with two circumstances, the destruction of an ancient religion, and the establishment of a new religion; or rather these two objects being confounded with each other, the human mind, which constantly endeavours to relieve herself  
by

by abstraction, from the fatigue of entering into long details, saw only a war on foot, between two powerful rivals, and did not hesitate to describe christianity, as engaged against paganism. But was paganism a religion? far from it; the term Pagan was not adopted until some ages after the appearance of Jesus Christ.*(f)* The Phenicians, the Ægyptians, the Greeks, the Italians, and the Celtæ, had all different ideas, not only of the nature and origin of the gods, but of that kind of adoration, which they imagined it necessary to pay them. There were no relative ideas, no connection even between the  
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*(f)* Pagan, from Pagus, a village, because the christian emperors having banished the idolaters from all the cities, they were obliged to retire to the villages; or rather because Constantine drove out, from amongst his troops, and expelled into the villages, all those who were not christians. Neither of these explanations is satisfactory. The first mention which history makes of the Gentiles, under the name of Pagans, is in the reign of Valentinian, and in the three hundred and sixty-fifth year of Christ. See "Gothofredus de statu Paganorum sub imperatoribus Christianis." Echard imagines that the inhabitants of the country, remaining longer attached to the worship of idols, than the inhabitants of cities, the idolaters were therefore called Pagans. Paganiani. b. 7. c. 1.

names of their gods; nor did they barely admit of a translation from one language into another language. Examine all the ancient nations, and endeavour to form from their notions, with regard to *Taut*, *Brimba*, or *Brama*, *Tipbon*, *Ofris*, *Zeus*, *Jupiter*, *Odin*, &c. a system which conciliates every opinion, and forms a point of re-union against a new religion. It may be said that such a system is visible in *Polytheism*. But this assertion is far from carrying conviction along with it; for we, in our turns, must ask what is understood by religion? doth it mean the opinion prevailing amongst the people? and yet, with ignorant men, all opinion degenerates into superstition, and all worship into idolatry. In this respect, it will appear that even the christians possessed but very few advantages over the Pagans: for were we to enquire into the religious state of all the southern part of America, and of some nations situated to the North and South of Europe,<sup>(g)</sup> we should find that their notions on the Trinity, the Virgin, the Saints, the Angels, and the Devils,

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(g) The Russians still preserve their little idols, and render them the same worship, which the Pagans rendered to their Penates.

were little short of idolatry. If, on the contrary, it be imagined that through every age, and amidst every religion, the ideas of the vulgar are to be rejected, we shall, then, perceive that amongst the ancients, the priests referred all their doctrine to deism, and all their morality to politics. It is certain that the dogma of one God alone was the first truth revealed in the Eleusinian mysteries. Lactantius asserts, that Alexander learned this truth from the mouth of the Hierophant; and a very slight knowledge of antiquity may convince us that this belief was the basis of all initiation, and the hidden principle of every doctrine. The freedom with which even the ministers of religion spoke of their divinities, is evident from the writings of Cicero; and Diodorus Siculus accounts for the origin of the popular opinions, relative to the *Styx*, *Acheron*, *Minos*, *Rhadamantbus*, &c. &c. It were a still more useless task, should we attempt to search for Polytheism amongst the philosophers. In whatsoever obscurities their ideas, concerning the nature of things and first causes, were involved, we may assert, that no sect existed, the principles of

of

of which, had any thing in common with the religion of the people.

We shall not, in this place, trespass upon the readers time, by endeavouring to shew what little solidity could have belonged to an edifice, without symmetry in any of its parts, and without the least correspondence to a general plan. The Pagan religion, despised by its own ministers, inveighed against by the philosophers, and neglected, the most frequently, by the people, was equally incapable of striking a deep root, and of forming a code of doctrines, difficult to be overthrown. The credit which it maintained during a length of time is, notwithstanding, unquestionable. To account, therefore, for all this, we must have recourse to some more distant cause; for it is not sufficient to demonstrate with Mr. Hume, that Polytheism is the first religion which must have offered itself to an untutored set of men; it is not even sufficient to have discovered that this religion was mild, and that its modes of worship were agreeable and ingenious: on the one hand, it may be answered, that it existed during the most polished ages; and on the other hand, that the pain and cruelty, attending its practices, have

have been already proved. We must, therefore, lead our observations still farther, and we shall, then, discover in the system of politics, the true reason of the long duration of Polytheism.

Would we, in general, comprehend some circumstance from antiquity, we must not lose sight of two important facts, namely, that Asia hath been, as it were, the cradle of the sciences, and Greece, the cradle of poetry. From this single consideration, a thousand consequences will naturally flow. The poets, that is to say, the *makers*,<sup>(b)</sup> the first amongst the Greeks who enjoyed the knowledge of any thing, have arranged, as well as they possibly could, all the materials which they were able to collect, from the sentiments of the Phenicians and Ægyptians, relative to the origin of the world, and the generation of gods; but these *makers*, faithful to their name, and their profession, forged many new  
fables,

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(b) Poet, Ποιητής, from Ποιέω, to make, to fabricate, to compose, &c. We do not, here, pretend to deny that poetry is of an earlier date, and that the Greeks received it from the Phenicians; but we allude to a regular poem which, whilst it became the language of the priests and the legislators, was the chief amusement of the people.

fables, which they mixed with the ancient fables, and, particularly, laboured at attempts to circulate delusive accounts, concerning the origin of the Greeks; an origin for which they blushed to have been indebted to merchants, or a people of slaves. Amidst these *makers*, Homer quickly obtained the first rank. He composed so many tales, and spoke of such a multitude of things, that his books, in this respect, like the Koran, were of themselves sufficient to found a religion. And yet, the oracle of Delphos, another *maker*, who *worked* with hexameter verses, Lycurgus, who made *metrical* laws, pretending, indeed, that they were dictated by Apollo, but which he had stolen from the Cretans,<sup>(i)</sup> Hesiod, and many others, began to form, from a very small number of acquired intelligences, and from a very great number of ingenious conjectures, a monstrous and gigantic scaffolding of materials. From all these poems, and all these oracles, arose a particular language, stiled *μῦθος*, in opposition to *λογός*, which

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(i) Rhetra, or oracle, an appellation given to the laws of Lycurgus, who pretended to have received them from the mouth of Apollo, whose usual manner of speaking to him was in numbers.



which was the language of reason, and which did not prevail until some time afterwards. But the *μύθοι* maintained its ground during whole ages; and as the poets had continually treated of the most interesting subjects, such as the origin of republics, the principles of legislation, the rights of magistrates, the limits of states, &c. poetry, or fable, or, if it be a more proper expression, religion became, as it were, the general repository of archives, and the titles of the nobility of republics. From thence sprang the obligation which united polity with religion, and the necessity which preserved tenets and ceremonies. The oracles had frequently decided on the privileges of states; and these points had been determined even by the authority of the poets. (*k*) Who could have questioned the infallibility of the oracles? who could have treated Homer with disrespect?!

Saint Augustin(*l*) quotes a beautiful definition from Varro, in which that author divides theology into three kinds: the fabulous  
kind,

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(*k*) Two verses of Homer decided a contest between two republics, which disputed their metropolitical right over a colony.

(*l*) De civitate Dei. l. 6. c. 6.

kind, *μῦθικόν*, the physical or natural kind, and the civil or legal kind. The first kind contains fables, the metamorphosis, &c. the second kind, which treats of the nature of the gods, and of things, is taught only in the schools; and the third kind, which is but the ritual of feasts, or of sacrifices, is entrusted to the priesthood. Varro saith that, from these three kinds of theology, we can only select the first, and the last kind, as proper to be given up to the people. “*Prima, inquit, theologia maximè accomodata est ad theatrum, secunda ad mundum, tertia ad urbem.*” But this fabulous theology, which Varro particularly annexes to the theatre, was intimately connected with civil theology; and each of these did not fail to unite themselves against natural theology, which was their greatest enemy. Natural theology unfortunately neglected, during a length of time, the only arms which she might have employed with success; observation and experience. She was even weak enough to borrow frequently from the first, her language, and from the last, her impostures and her mysteries. These three systems were so strongly re-acted upon, by one another, that religion

became allegorical, and philosophy superstitious: but whilst the commerce of nations, whilst voyages and conquests multiplied the objects of adoration, by the adoption of foreign rites, curiosity, emulation, and subtilty increased the sects and the schools. What could have arisen from thence, except the discredit into which philosophy and religion fell together? the extravagant custom of adoring all sorts of divinities, from the great God Jupiter, down to the God Crepitus; and of maintaining all kinds of opinions; from the most magisterial dogmatism, to the most obstinate Pyrrhonism, soon placed the priests and the sophists in the same rank, and at length gave birth to that sentiment, which they dread the most amongst the Great, the sentiment of indifference.

Amidst these disasters, religion still enjoyed two great supports, in the vanity of the people, and the polity adopted by the magistrates. Greece was the receptacle of the gods; in Greece every place seem filled with their presence. The *Olympic* and *Isthmian* games; the *Panathenæa*; all those magnificent festivals peculiar to each city; the great multitude of oracles, each in high reputation,  
and

and each promising to Greece an eternal splendor; what objects were these for a confident and frivolous people! unfortunately, whilst the Greeks were busied in the contemplation of their actual glory, a man of Macedon, (to borrow an expression from Demosthenes) came to throw all their ideas into confusion, by insulting over a legislation, for which, indeed, they felt but little anxiety, and by disturbing their religious feasts, to the celebration of which, they were attached with the most bigotted idolatry. To this man of Macedon succeeded another man from the same country, who, at once destroyed and established tyranny; who overthrew an ancient monarchy, and gave birth to new dynasties, all warlike and ferocious, whose oppressive power overwhelmed the gods, the priests, the philosophers, and the people.

But this, as yet, was nothing, and there had constantly remained some particulars belonging to these two systems of civil and dramatic theology, *accomodatæ ad urbem, ad theatrum*. At length, a people consisting of exceedingly bad theologians, but of excellent warriors, arrive to overthrow the successors of the man of Macedon, and treat as vile

slaves, the descendants of gods, heroes, and poets. Then every expectation was disappointed, and every prophecy was belied. Religion, then, lost all her credit; if the least mark of her footsteps was to be seen, it was confined to the theatre, and owed its preservation to that happy alliance, which she had, for a long time, contracted with the muses and the polite arts.

At the first glance, the Romans seem to have been so powerful, that they might have given law, even in matters of opinion, to the whole universe; but, if I may be allowed the paradox, they were neither sufficiently intelligent, nor sufficiently ignorant, to found a religion. Their own dogmas did not belong to them; they were incapable of forming a code of doctrines; their first notions of this kind were derived from the Etruscans, a people much addicted to divination: thus, the earliest traces of religion, visible amongst them, may be discovered in the custom of consulting the auspices, established by Romulus.<sup>(m)</sup> Numa, originally a Sabine, and  
better

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<sup>(m)</sup> Romulus consulted the flight of birds before he began to build Rome.

better instructed than the Romans, imagined that it was necessary to deceive, before he could reduce a ferocious race of men, who had assassinated a warlike prince, and the founder of the empire. He, therefore, introduced superstition to assist authority; but he was more engaged in the establishment of ceremonies, than in the circulation of tenets. He was, in general, the mildest of all the imposters, and merited the applause of posterity. By little, and little, the several relations extended themselves: on the one hand, the commerce carried on with the Grecian colonies, and on the other hand, the establishment of the Tarquins, could not fail to fix a reputation upon some new opinions. An attempt was made to reconcile these vulgar notions, with the more refined ideas of the people of Greece; but the names, and the rites, which underwent no alteration, were evident proofs of the essential difference, which existed between these opinions, and the primitive dogmas.<sup>(n)</sup> Cicero derives the

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word

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(n) What relation is there between Cronos, Zeus, Ares, Hermes, Poseidon, and Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Neptune?

word *Jupiter*, from *juvare*, to help,<sup>(o)</sup> to assist; and indeed, the inscriptions, *Jovi Statori*, *Jovi Feretrio*, frequently to be met with on altars, seem to mean no more than *to the assisting power, who stopped the course of the enemy; to the assisting power, who struck the enemy*. It is also very certain that the whole history of the Roman Mars, hath no connection with the history of the Grecian Ares. Even Flora is absolutely a Roman divinity. Lactantius<sup>(p)</sup> pretends that she was indebted for her origin, to a courtezan, who, having acquired a large fortune, left a considerable sum, by will, to keep up the annual celebration of public games, in honour of her memory. This author adds, that after a certain period, the senate, humiliated by the idea of having paid such homage to a prostitute, thought it proper to turn her into the goddess of flowers. It is, in this place, unnecessary to relate, how the Romans, not much contented with their own gods, had frequent

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<sup>(o)</sup> Some have derived the word Jupiter, from *JAH*, Jehova Pater; but I cannot think that this alliance of the Greek word Pater, with the Hebrew word Jehovah, appears very natural.

<sup>(p)</sup> Instit. l. 4. c. 20.

frequent recourse to the gods of the Greeks ; how they consulted their oracles, whensoever they imagined that they might enjoy the power of drawing up the answers ; and how they went in search of the god of Epidaurus, but had the address to permit his escape, lest the dreadful serpent, which represented Esculapius, might not be acknowledged. One very important observation is, that religion, whatsoever might be her nature, remained constantly within the hands of the Great ; and served them as a kind of *Ægis*, against the tumultuous insurrections of the people, whom they oppressed.

We have already observed, in the former part of this work, that the privilege of taking the auspices, was a distinguishing mark of the essential difference existing between the nobility, and the people. We have declared, that by this privilege alone, the condition of the citizens was enabled to stand good in law ; because no other privilege could have stamped an authenticity on their marriages. The whole Roman history testifies, how necessary it was, for all those, who were destined to fill the first offices of the magistracy ; and I could produce several instances of consuls,



quitting the armies, because some formalities had been wanting, during their inauguration. Every one can recollect the fine discourses, related by Livy, and Dionysius Halicarnassius, wherein those authors have so ably unfolded the principles on which the Patricians grounded their claims, in support of the exclusion of the Plebeians, from the consulship. What! exclaimed the Appii, and their adherents, shall we, then see at the head of our armies, consuls who never took the auspices; *inauspicati consules!* in short, nothing hath been more clearly proved, than that intimate union subsisting, amongst the Romans, between their government, and their religion, but more particularly, between religion and aristocracy. Thus, we need not hesitate to assert, that the efforts of the people, struck equally against the government and against the religion: and as James the first was wont to observe, *no bishops, no king, so, at Rome, it might have been said, the more nobles, the more religion.*

Democracy, shaken for a moment, by Sylla, was continually acquiring fresh vigour until, having degenerated into anarchy, the licentiousness of all occasioned the despotism

tism of a single one. But we must not lose sight of a very important truth ; namely, that the people never erect an individual into a despot, except from a principle of hatred against the great, who tyrannise over them. We can produce a very recent instance of this, from Denmark ;(q) there, the people erected an individual into a despot, with an enthusiasm equal to that enthusiasm which animated the Romans, at the time of the expulsion of their kings. A very slight acquaintance with the Roman history, is sufficient to convince us, that the most disapproved emperors, such as Caligula, Nero, and Commodus, had maintained some degree of favour, with the people, merely, because they despised the senate, and persecuted the nobility. And yet, it was not necessary to have been a Caligula, or a Nero, but only a politic prince, in order to have perceived, that the people, becoming, from day to day, more and more abject, might easily have been gained over, by distributions and spectacles ; whereas the last traces of the government subsisted still amidst the senate,  
and

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(q) In 1660.

and the small number of nobles, who were the relicts of those illustrious families, the ancient objects of public veneration. Now, we have already explained the intimate union, which subsisted, for a long time, between aristocracy, and religion. Besides, every thing which is ancient, every thing which acquires a particular and independant importance, wears, in the eyes of despots, a kind of pedantic characteristic, which troubles them. It was, therefore, as much through inclination, as policy, that the emperors suffered all religious opinions to fall into disgrace: (r) and unfortunately for these opinions amidst the small number of good princes, who succeeded Augustus, there were found only philosophers, too vertuous to be exposed to fear and repentance, the usual food of superstition, and too enlightened to cherish a medley of absurdities, with the splendour, which was reflected from the throne. It became still worse, when foreigners supplied the

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(r) Tiberius, whose policy aimed the most dreadful blows at the authority of the senate, seems to have been particularly free from all those superstitions of his country, which he found acting in opposition, to his arbitrary views.

the place of princes, who were scarcely Roman citizens, and of course, gave themselves no concern about the nobility; when the principal employments, whether civil, or military, were entrusted to Barbarians, who had never read Homer, nor heard either of Mercury, or Apollo. These ferocious men, accustomed to worship their god, under the form of a wolf, and to revere only the spirit of the mountain, or the genius of the tempests, found themselves exactly in the same situation, with those savages of America, whom the most ignorant of our missionaries converted; by thousands. Full of contempt for the Romans, they rejected their gods, of whose history they were ignorant, and whose power they defied.

This was the period at which the christian religion began to extend herself. Her members, more dispersed abroad, and more zealous, continually animated by the spirit of making proselytes, frequently irritated by persecution, and, moreover, inculcating a doctrine, very opposite to that contempt which the Romans and the Greeks expressed against the Barbarians, must, consequently, have

have presented themselves to these last in a more favourable point of view; and the simplicity of their dogmas, (for we shall observe farther on, that nothing could have been more simple, than the tenets introduced by the apostles and their successors) was much better suited to the comprehension of these plain and properly-tempered minds, which had not yet been either infected by superstitions, or subtilised by idle dialectics.

To sum up the whole, then, we may conclude that Greece was the land of paganism; that all the religious ideas, established in this country, and united to polity, were overthrown by the conquests of the Romans; that the Roman government becoming, at first, aristocratical, then democratical, and at length monarchical, religion which was the support of aristocracy must necessarily have fallen with it; and, in short, that the invasions of the Barbarians gave the finishing stroke to the destruction of the last remains of the ancient opinions.

## C H A P. III.

*On the establishment of Christianity.*

WE cannot too often repeat what hath been already mentioned, namely, that we have resolved, whilst we trace the progress of christianity, to enquire only into the human or natural means; means, the importance of which the theologians themselves do not affect to deny; but indeed, if providence had chosen to establish a system of worship upon miracles,<sup>(s)</sup> it would have been sufficient to have

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(s) Origen, in his defence against Celsus, agrees with the Pagan philosophy, in supposing that several miracles might have been wrought by magic; and the only rule which he prescribes for distinguishing the miracles, which proceeded from Heaven, is founded on the morality,

have wrought at Rome a small part of those miracles, of which the Jews only were the witnesses; or even to have fixed on these, such a character of authenticity, as to have rendered it impossible that they should ever have been called in question, or passed over in silence, which two of the most learned men of Judæa, have, notwithstanding, done. (1) On the contrary, we perceive that the first advances of christianity were slow and laborious, and particularly, whilst we examine it under its political relations, and by its influence over the state of society; this species of investigation being our chief object.

We must, here, guard against the indolence of the human mind, against that particular kind

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rality, the doctrine, and the manners of those who worked those miracles. No one is ignorant of the prodigies brought forth by the magicians of Pharaoh; and it is also well known, that when the heathens placed the miracles of Apollonius Tyanus, in opposition to the miracles of Jesus Christ, the christians, in answer to this objection, were satisfied with scrutinizing the life and character of this philosopher; as, in their opinion, it was very immaterial, what miracle he might have performed, if it were certain that his doctrine and his conduct deserved neither respect nor confidence.

(1) Josephus and Philo.

kind of curiosity, which flies from application, dreads the falling into doubt more than it likes instruction, and is the oftneft satisfied with some principal points whereon it may rest its wavering opinion. We resemble those travellers, who casting their eyes from the summit of some mountain upon an extensive plain below, observe here and there a tower and a steeple, and then return, persuaded that they are acquainted with the country. We know that Jesus Christ hath given his name to that religion, which all, who are stiled christians, at this time profess; and we believe that immediately after Jesus Christ, there was a christian religion. The extreme aversion, also, which prevails amongst the christians of our days, and the Jews, inclines us to suppose, that there must have been, from the beginning, a very distinguishable scission, an openly-declared war between the two religions. All these opinions are not conformable to the facts. Several historical monuments prove that the Romans for a long time confounded the Jews with the Christians. I shall only produce one instance, by a quotation from Suetonius, wherein that author, enumerating the laudable actions of Claudius,

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at the beginning of his reign, saith, that he drove from Rome the Jews, who continually revolted, and were *spurred on by Christus.*(*u*) Now, Suetonius wrote under Trajan; that is, more than one hundred years after Jesus Christ. It is certain, that Tacitus, who lived at the same period, uses the word Christian, when he informs us, that Nero was desirous of making that suspicion generally circulated concerning his having set fire to Rome, alight upon the christians; but he speaks of them as only a society of sectaries issuing from Judæa; “*repressaque in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modo per Judæam originem ejus mali, &c.*” The christians themselves did not immediately assume this respectable name;(*x*) some stiled themselves *Jesseans*, from *Jesse*, the father of David;

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(*u*) Judæos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit. Dion mentions one Acilius Glabrio, who, under the reign of Domitian, was accused of atheism, because he became a Jew; Bingham says that we must, here, understand Christian. . . . See Antiquities of the church, b. 1. ch. 2.

(*x*) According to the acts of the apostles, the faithful, that is, the new converts, took the name of Christians at Antioch, from the time of the apostles: but it appears that this appellation did not grow common until a long while afterwards.

David; or rather from Jesus, their Master. Others were called *Therapeutæ*; others, the *faithful believers*, the *elect*, (y) *contemplators*, &c. Some amongst them bore the appellation of *Pisciculi*, *little fishes*, either because they were engendered, or regenerated by the waters of baptism; or on account of the initial letters of these words; *Ἰησοῦς χριστός Θεοῦ υἱός Σωτήρ*, *Jesus Christus, Dei filius, Servator*, which form the Greek word *ΙΧΘΥΣ*, a fish. Others even consented to pass for a sect of philosophers, as may be collected from these words of Melito, in his treatise *de Pascha*: “*hæc enim philosophiæ secta quam profitemur apud barbaros viguit.*” (z) Besides, as they had no temples, and as they celebrated no public worship, it became natural to consider them, rather as simple sectaries, than as the apostles of a new religion. Mr. Crevier observes with justice, that before the persecution

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(y) Πιστοί, εκλεκτοί, γνωστοί. See Bingham's antiquities of the church.

(z) This sect of philosophers, to which we allude, began to acquire some reputation amongst the Barbarians. See Euseb. hist. eccles. l. 4.

of Maximin, that is to say, (a) two hundred and forty years after Jesus Christ, history doth not, any where, assert that the christians had churches. (b) Arnobius, an author of the third age, positively saith, "we erect no altars, we offer no incense:" (c) and, also observes, "that they believe not in the gods, who believe that their residence is in the temples, and that they should offer up incense to them, and honour their images." Let me add, that if an emperor, so well instructed, so well employed in the performance of his duty, as Trajan was, had no particular knowledge of the christian opinions; and if the historians have scarcely made any mention of them, till the reign of Constantine, it is reasonable to conclude, that they were either very little expanded, at their first opening, or that they were not seen in that important light, where in their merit should have placed them.

If,

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(a) Monsieur Crevier hath committed a small error in chronology. It was only in the 238th year of Christ, that Maximin, after an usurpation of almost three years, was assassinated. K.

(b) Hist. des Emp. tom. 5. p. 111.

(c) Non altaria fabricemus, non cætorum sanguinem animantium demus, non thura, &c. l. 6. adversus gentes.

If, on the other hand, we examine with attention the works of the fathers of the church, or of those authors, whom she hath consecrated, such as Origen, Eusebius, Arnobius, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, &c. we shall perceive that the separation of the Christians and the Jews was not so quickly brought about, as some persons have imagined. It appears, indeed, from the *acts of the apostles*, that the preaching of Saint Paul, and the conversion of the Gentiles, gave birth to a system of christianity, more pure, and more disengaged from judaical observances; and yet Saint Peter remained, for a long while, attached to these last; and the church of Jerusalem adhered so obstinately to them, that Eusebius positively asserts, that there was, in this city, a succession of fifteen circumcised bishops.(d) The church, or the congregation(e) of Jerusalem had not, therefore, renounced the law of Moses, although the preaching of Jesus Christ was admitted. There is even every appearance, that the

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Jews,

(d) See Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 5.

(e) The church, in Greek, *Εκκλησία*, signifies an assembly, a congregation.

Jews, having been, for a long time, settled at Rome, maintained a great influence over the newly-rising state of christianity. This may be seen from the letter ascribed to Saint Clement, the Pope, and supposed to have been written before the conquest of Jerusalem. This letter doth not, in any manner, treat of the tenets introduced by Jesus Christ, except that tenet, relative to the resurrection, which was known to the Jews before; and this too is supported by the example of the Phenix, a subject much more properly belonging to fable than to the gospel. The principal point, into which Saint Clement enters, is the ecclesiastical discipline which had been disturbed at Corinth, by a sedition amongst the faithful. He, very forcibly, and with great latitude, inculcates an hierarchical subordination; but he draws all his arguments from that subordination established at Jerusalem. He saith: "the high priest, the sacrificing priests, and the Levites have all their several functions. The Laity are obliged to follow the necessary precepts, &c." A perpetual sacrifice is not offered in all places,

places; nor is the sacrifice of prayer, and for sin offered, except at Jerusalem. (*f*)

These passages clearly prove the union of the primitive Christians, with the metropolis of judaism, and the temple of Jerusalem. In more than an age afterwards, Saint Justin declares, that a man may be saved, if he observe the sabbath; but he adds that, the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem hath rendered sacrifices impossible. (*g*) Origen, in his defence against Celsus, violently repels the reproach of desertion, with which they were loaden, who forsook the law of Moses; (*b*) he answers, that they, who embraced the faith of Jesus Christ, never quitted the ancient law; that they called themselves only Ebionites, that is, beggars, receivers of alms; (*i*) that Saint Peter was always attached

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(*f*) See Hist. Eccl. de M. Fleury, tom. 1. 4to. p. 248.

(*g*) See his dialogue with Tripho.

(*b*) See l. 2. adversus Celsum.

(*i*) The spirit of charity and alms-giving which manifested itself, from the first appearance of christianity, hath contributed, not a little, to facilitate its progress. Under a despotic government, like the government over which the emperors presided, there must necessarily have

to the ancient law; that he even refused to confer with the Gentiles, lest he might have alarmed the Jews; and that Saint Paul saith himself, that he became a Jew for the advantage

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have been many indigent persons and beggars; under a government, still preserving the traces of aristocracy, foreigners, and newly-introduced individuals, could not avoid the being involved in many humiliating circumstances. The first found a resource in the enjoyment of a share from the offerings. The last received some consolation from those ideas of equality and brotherhood which reigned amongst the Christians.

It seems as if the heathens were but little affected with this christian charity, which, indiscriminately, received with open arms, all conditions, all ages, and particularly the two sexes. On the contrary, they took, from hence, an advantage, to reproach the Christians with having dispersed their dogmas, only, either amongst children and silly women, *mulierculas*, or amongst the lowest artificers, such as cobblers, dyers, &c. It may be seen, with what confidence, Origen (l. 3.) refutes this objection, by shewing that, although these assemblies might have appeared contemptible, from the manner in which they were composed, yet their object was sacred and sublime; and that, after all, it was no great misfortune, if those children, whom they saw running to them, did escape from their frivolous tutors, who were only capable of teaching them fables, &c. Such as wish to see a fuller account of the situation of the primitive Christians, must consult the learned dissertation, by Mr. Lami, *de eruditione Apostolorum*,

vantage of the Jews.<sup>(k)</sup> In short, it seems, as if this wise man thought that the law should subsist, until the eyes of mankind might be sufficiently opened, to discern the mystical meaning of the scripture, and to understand all those figures concealed under vulgar expressions. It is in this sense, that he cites a passage from the gospel, in which Jesus Christ saith to his disciples: “adhuc multa habeo vobis dicere, sed non potestis portare modo. Cum autem venerit spiritus veritatis, docebit vos omnem veritatem.” “I have as yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when He, the spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth.” (St. John, c. 16. v. 12. 13.) Ori-

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*lorum*, in which he proves, that the apostles and disciples were not only simple and unpolished men, but that even some criminals were found amongst them. He, also, discovers beyond a contradiction, that the gospels are filled with errors in language, &c. Some learned men have observed that if the Vulgate Bible was written in such bad Latin, it was, chiefly, because the translation was intended for those who did not understand a more elegant Latin.

(k) “Unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews.” 1 Cor. c. 9. v. 20. Two passages in the Acts confirm this circumstance. C. 16. v. 3. C. 21. v. 21. &c. K.



gen doth not scruple to assert, that all the christian doctrine is not comprised in the Gospel, Jesus Christ having found his disciples too ignorant to receive the explanation of the figurative and mystical sense of the scripture. (1)

Nevertheless, the period was already arrived, at which the christians were to separate them-

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(1) It were to be wished, that a passion for the interpretation of figures and prophecies had not carried the most celebrated authors too far. I could indeed furnish a multitude of examples of the abuses which have resulted from this passion, but I shall content myself with producing only some few instances, and, solely with the intention of proving how necessary it is that a writer should have recourse to his reason, even in the very moment, when he has the strongest grounds for supposing himself inspired. St. Justin introduces in his first apology, this passage from Genesis, "non deficiet princeps ex Juda, nec dux a femore ejus, donec veniat, qui repositus est," or rather, "qui statutus est," or any expression, (for Le Clerc, in his "bibliothèque choisie," hath proved that this passage was suspected to have been interpolated,) "et ipse erit expectatio gentium, ligans ad vitem pullum suum, et lavans in sanguine uvæ stolam suam." "A prince of the race of Judah shall not be wanting, nor a chief, issuing from his thigh, (or from his thighs) until he shall come, who is appointed to come; and he shall be the expectation of nations, binding his foal unto the vine, and washing his

themselves, entirely, from the Jews. After the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, there no longer remained a point of re-union for those who continued attached to the ancient law. The centre of the Judaical Catholicity (if I may be allowed the expression) could

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his robe in the blood of the grape.\* Now, according to St. Justin, these words, "binding his foal unto the vine," mean Jesus Christ, who, before he made his entry into Jerusalem, unloosed an ass, which was tied to the foot of the vine; "lavans in sanguine uvæ," the blood of the grape signifies the blood of Jesus Christ, who, not being made up of human blood, is better characterised by the blood of the grape; "et stolam ejus" his tunic, his robe, allude to the faithful, who compose, as it were, the cloathing of Jesus Christ. Saint Justin doth not stop even at this singular commentary. He saith, that the demons, in order to deceive mankind, have imitated all these figures in a fable of their

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\* In our English translation of the Bible, (Gen. c. 49. v. 10. 11.) the passage runs thus: "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses colt unto the choice wine, he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." If the reader be desirous of perusing a very learned explanation, he need only be informed, that the celebrated bishop of Gloucester hath written the Divine Legation. The third and fourth sections of the fifth book, and the first parts of the fourth volume, abound with strokes of erudition, peculiar to this right reverend author. It may, also, be proper to refer to the "letters on the Septuagint" by Mr. Spearman. K.

could no more recover itself: it was become impossible to sacrifice at Jerusalem: the means, therefore, of observing the ancient law, were all exterminated. It is this argument, which St. Justin employs against Tripho; and it is this argument, of which Tertullian hath also  
 availed

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own production. Thus, they have mentioned Bacchus, as alluded to, in the passage, "ligans ad vitem pullum suum, et lavans in sanguine uvæ," "binding unto the vine, &c." "In fact, (he adds) as they knew not whether pullum signified a foal, or the colt of an ass, they have introduced an ass into the mysteries of Bacchus; (probably the ass of Silenius; and not to be detected in an error, in case that pullum signified a foal, they have also introduced the horse Pegasus. With the same view, they have composed the history of Hercules, to correspond with that passage relative to David, "fortis ut Gigas." It is true (he proceeds) that they have not mentioned the cross; but to supply this defect in prophecies and fables, God hath chosen that this sign of redemption should be represented every where; as in ships, the masts and yards of which form the shape of a cross; amongst the implements of agriculture, such as the rake; and even in the shape of the human frame, which is destined to be upright like a pillar, whilst the nose, with the rest of the body, represents a kind of cross." The same author, constantly employed in discovering the symbol of the cross, observes, in another place, that the Paschal lamb should be eaten roasted, because a lamb on the gridiron, or the spit, resembles the figure of a crucified man.

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availed himself, after him. Christianity must then have drawn a double advantage from this event; for whilst it gave a mortal wound to the Jews, by destroying their political and religious

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Lactantius, that elegant and learned writer, falls into the same absurdity, when he saith, that carnal circumcision is no more than the figure of the spiritual circumcision, which discovers the heart; for, according to his opinion, there exists a certain exterior likeness between the part which circumcision lays open, and the figure of a heart. "Quoniam pars illa que circumciditur, habet quandam similitudinem cordis." (Inst. l. 4.)

Of all the ecclesiastical authors, Origen is the most attached to the figurative sense. He seems to have involved this system, even in cabalistical ideas; for, in refuting Celsus, who maintains that it is not ridiculous to invoke the divinity by every kind of name, such as *Adonai, Jupiter, Jehovab, &c.* he asserts; that all the names of the Patriarchs are mystical, or cabalistical; and that an invocation of demons could never succeed, if, instead of making use of the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they were to go through with it, in the name of *Father of men, Wrestler, Chosen Being, &c.*

Even Saint Cyprian is not free from this reproach, when, insisting upon the necessity of consecrating the wine, he saith, that Melchisedeck had consecrated wine, and that Jesus Christ, who is a sacrificer of an order, superior to Melchisedeck, cannot, properly, consecrate with water: that as wine dissipates uneasiness, so the blood of our Lord drives away the old man; that water represents the people; and the mixture of  
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religious empire, it prepared, at the same time, new arms, wherewith to encounter Polytheism, by sending out, into all the provinces of the empire, a great number of men,

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the two liquors, the union of Jesus Christ, with the church. (See hist. eccl. de Fleury, tom. 2. p. 190.) But, Saint Barnabas, or the composer of the letters which pass under his name, hath, if possible, gone beyond all these absurdities. He perceives within the number of three hundred and eighteen persons, whom Abraham caused to be circumcised, the name of Jesus, expressed in a cypher, and his cross represented by the letter *Tau*, which enters into the cypher. In the three constitutions of Moses, or rather in his prohibitions against the eating of unclean animals, he discovers a concealed precept, which he explains thus: "non leporem manducabis" "thou shalt not eat of the hare," signifies, thou shalt not defile boys; because the hare, or probably, the rabbit, every year makes a new hole. "Belluam non manducabis," "thou shalt not eat of any wild beast" signifies, thou shalt not be an adulterer, lascivious, because the wild beasts (he undoubtedly meant the hyæna) partake of the two sexes, and alternately enjoy each. "Mustellam non manducabis," "thou shalt not eat of the weasel," signifies, thou shalt not prostitute thy mouth to the most infamous of pollutions, (the text is much plainer) "for the mustella, or weasel, brings forth at the mouth." Here physic and natural history are as much at a fault as logic. It is needless to extend this note any farther, as it, already, sufficiently marks out the spirit, in which the authors of the first ages of the church have drawn up their writings,

men, whose religion was founded on Deism, and whose opinions approached much nearer to the doctrine of the Christians, than to the fables of Paganism.

Many authors, astonished at the silence of all the historians, with regard to the Jewish nation, have concluded themselves justified in supposing them to have been a poor, despised, and wandering multitude; but they must acknowledge, that if their origin was obscure, yet ample amends were made for this disadvantage, by their subsequent condition. If we may credit Josephus, the population of Judæa, considering the small extent of this province, was very great; but several writers, less suspected of partiality, than Josephus, assert that, under the first emperors, the Jews had spread themselves through Palestine, Syria, Cilicia, a great part of the Archipelago, and almost all Asia Minor. They had formed establishments in most of the great cities, but particularly at Cæsarea, at Alexandria, and even at Rome. But, after the bloody wars of Titus, and of Vespasian; a still greater number came pouring in, amongst the provinces of the empire. The majority of these Jews, whether dispersed, and fugitives, or  
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whether settled, during a long period, in the commercial cities, so far from having been concerned in the death of Jesus Christ, were even ignorant of his name. And as till then, they had been attached to their religion, solely by those relations, which they preserved with their Jerusalem, and by the custom of either, sometimes going, or sending proxies to offer sacrifices in the temple, it became easy for them to accomodate themselves to the new law, which proved the inutility of these sacrifices, and which seemed so fully justified by the event. But, whether they consented to embrace the christian faith, or whether they persisted in the observation of their ceremonies, and their dogmas, their contempt for the Gods of the heathens, and their aversion, from the mode in which these Gods were worshipped, supplied the two religions with sufficient matter for reciprocal and satirical abuse. Hence, it hath happened, that the profane writers frequently confounded the Jews, and the Christians together, in those charges of atheism, which they have, on several occasions, levelled against them; but these odious imputations, designed, at all times, to irritate the people,  
and

and spur on the magistrates, brought over several new converts to christianity. (m)

Many philosophers, who beheld with indignation, those fables with which the common people were amused, and were weary of the vain disputes of the schools, felt a growing partiality towards a religion, the basis of which was the established notion of the existence of ONE ALMIGHTY AND ONLY GOD. They soon endeavoured to unite themselves with the Christians; and they were not less

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(m) Much may be said, concerning the manner in which the Christian religion was affected, by the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. A modern writer hath very ingeniously observed, that the clergy drew from this circumstance, an advantageous opportunity of increasing their own consequence. For the bishops, or inspectors, *Episcopi*, the elders, or honourable persons, *Presbyteroi*, and the overseers, or attending priests, *Diaconoi*, who were but the ministers of a society, considering equality as their first principle, did not hesitate to liken themselves to the Jewish hierarchy; the first comparing themselves to the great Pontiffs, the second to the priests, *Sacerdotes*, and the last to the Levites. "Cum post urbem Hierosolymam denuò everfam, spes omnis Judæis adempta esset rempublicam suam instaurandi, Episcopi similes tum videri volebant Pontificis maximi Judæorum, Presbites eodem quo sacerdotes loco versari dicebantur, Diaconi cum Levitis comparabantur. (Moshemii instit. Hist. Eccl. sect. 2. p. 2.)



less stricken with the simplicity of their doctrine, than with the mildness of their moral system. No superstition, no sacrifices, no exterior worship were found amongst them; the faithful were, then, satisfied, if they assembled, from time to time, in some great hall, and most frequently, at the houses of their particular friends: there, the Elder (*Presbus*) instructed them in the most familiar manner; this custom was either preceded, or followed by some lecture, taken out of the Gospel, or the Bible; and the whole was concluded with a simple repast, made up of such offerings, as the faithful, each according to his abilities, had brought, whilst the poor and the rich sat down, promiscuously, to the same meal. The bread, and the wine were always blessed by the Elder, and this entertainment was either followed, or accompanied by some canticles, in praise of God. (n)

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Equality

(n) The form of the Christian assemblies, afterwards, underwent some alteration. The persecutions to which the faithful were exposed, frequently obliged them to assemble before the break of day, in order to avoid the being discovered. They were, then, contented with making their oblations, and blessing the bread and wine. The repast was either neglected, or put off till  
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Equality amongst mankind, charity, beneficence, and the distributing of alms, were, at once, recommended, and practised, in these pious assemblies: where could humanity, where could true philosophy have seen a more respectable object?

But christianity began to break loose from her once exclusive connexion, with simple and obscure individuals. The spirit of discussion, so opposite to the spirit of charity,

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night, and a convenient place of meeting was fixed on, against that time. Two reasons rendered this arrangement necessary; first, because to have eaten early on the morning must have been an extraordinary circumstance, and especially, when this was done in commemoration of the last supper of Jesus Christ; secondly, because the Christians were fearful, lest it should be perceived, that they had drunk wine before the hour of dinner, the which circumstance, not being usual, might have detected them. When they afterwards began to enjoy more tranquility, they continued to assemble on the morning, and to distribute the bread and wine, as soon as their oblations and prayers were concluded. The divine service was then divided into two parts: the *Catechumenes*, the Strangers, *Audientes*, the Penitents, *Lugentes*, or *Hyemantes*, were admitted during the lectures, and some of the prayers, which were, for the most part, in the form of our litanies: they were, then, sent away; and this was called "Missa Cathecumenorum,"

had found means to introduce itself amongst the faithful, who, either compelled by persecutions, to examine more narrowly into their dogmas, or encouraged, and tempted by their first success, to engage in controversy, were soon observed to make their appearance in public, and to grow familiar with the schools. Platonism was, at that time, the most fashionable doctrine, amongst the philosophical dogmatists. It was, indeed, becoming corrupt, and so mingled with ideas

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menorum," the dismissal of the Catachumens. Then, began the prayers, which were followed by a long thanksgiving, or the *Eucharist*, *εὐχαριστία ἕως τοῦ τέλους*, and the communion; after which the faithful were dismissed; and this was called "Missa fidelium."

We must, however, confess, that some abuses crept into these assemblies of the first Christians, all sacred and respectable as they may appear to us. The bishops frequently reproached the rich, with having brought to the repast and to the communion, nice meats, which they reserved, solely, for themselves; whilst the poor had scarcely enough to satisfy their hunger. The contrary, sometimes, happened, and the poor partook so plentifully of the offerings, as to become intoxicated, and that so violently, that it was necessary to carry them away.

Consult, on the foregoing subject of all this notes the apology of Saint Justin, the letters of Pliny, and Bingham's antiquities of the church, b. 15. &c.

of the force of Theurgy, or Magic, as to have degenerated into a kind of superstitious system; but yet the first principle of this philosophy was, constantly, the established notion of ONE ETERNAL AND ONLY GOD, who had acted upon matter, and given a form to the chaos. Plato imagined that God, who comprehended within Himself, an universal idea of all possible things, could not have manifested himself, but by means of a Thought, an *Active Reason*, which He called the Son of God, His First-Born, His Word, (λογος.) It was by the Word, that God had placed in the World a vivifying Spirit, an active soul. It was by the Word, that Man had been created, and that a Soul had fallen to his lot. It was by the Word, also, that the universe had been peopled with Genii, and Demons, (Δαιμονοι) who occupied the space between God, inhabiting the upper regions, and man, dwelling on the surface of the earth. These ideas, borrowed, in a great measure, from the Gymnosophists,<sup>(o)</sup> tallied much more easily with

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Aristotle,

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(o) See Hyde, Holwell, &c.

Aristotle, and the atoms of Epicurus. Hence, arose that eagerness, with which the majority of the Fathers of the Church, so hastily, availed themselves of these ideas: hence arose that respect, and even that enthusiasm, with which they mentioned the divine Plato; (*p*) some asserting that God had revealed to him His Mysteries; others declaring that he had been in Judæa, and there received the knowledge of His doctrine: but, to the last opinion, even Saint Augustin, in spite of his great veneration for this philosopher, could not, possibly, subscribe; nay, this author hath taken the pains to collect authorities, from which he proves, that Plato died long before the translation of the Septuagint had enabled the Greeks to understand the books of Moses. (*q*)

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(*p*) See "de civitate Dei. l. 8. c. 2."

(*q*) All the works of the first fathers of the church, breathe the spirit of Platonism. Saint Justin expressly saith, that if he quitted the schools, in which the doctrine of Plato was taught, it was not on account of its being contrary to the doctrine of the Christians, but because it was not entirely the same. "Non equidem quod alienæ sunt a Christo Platonis doctrinæ, sed quod non sunt ex omni parte similes." (Apolog. 1.) This philosophy, involved in such a similitude to christianity,

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As enthusiasm and subtlety continually leap over all bounds, some disadvantages, of course, resulted from this union between philosophy, and religion. In fact, if a small number of simple and upright souls were entrusted with the preservation of the faith, yet the world was full of *Platonic Christians*, and

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*Christian*


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maintained an influence even over opinions, respecting worship, or, to speak more properly, over the notions of the relation between the creature, and the Creator; to this philosophy, Quietism seems indebted for its origin, as Saint Augustin expressly asserts, that, according to the Platonic system, the Philosopher ought to be in love with God; and that he who shall have thus loved God, will be entitled to enjoy him. “*Ipsum autem verum, ac summum bonum Plato dicit Deum, unde vult esse philosophum amatorem Dei, ut quoniam philosophia ad beatam viam tendit, fruens Deo fit beatus qui Deum amaverit.*” (de civ. Dei. l. 8. c. 8.)

Origen, whose character is that of having violated every principle, hath perverted the Platonic philosophy, more than any of the ecclesiastical writers. I shall only produce one example, from amongst a thousand; it is taken from his Apology, (book 6.) where, quoting these very obscure words of Plato; “*in rebus omnibus quas ad scientiam adhibere necesse est, tria sunt, quartum autem ipsamet scientia: horum primum est nomen, alterum sermo, tertium idolum, quartum scientia:*” three things are necessary to facilitate the attainment of knowledge, which is but the fourth thing; first the  
name,

*Christian Platonists.* A passion for Metaphysics soon became connected with a passion for Magic, and then, every thing was involved in controversies, and in prodigies. Hence sprang those schisms, and heresies, which, even in the most prosperous times, threw the church into divisions, and armed her children against

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name, secondly, the discourse, or the word, thirdly, the image, or the figure, and fourthly, knowledge, or science. Origen observes, that the Christians adopted the same principle, and that Saint John, the Baptist, is the name, the voice, "vox clamantis in deserto;" Jesus Christ, the discourse, or the word; that the sensible form, ("forma quæ in anima impressa manet postquam in illa Christus suum verbum, sua vulnera impressit") answers to the image, or the figure, and in short, that the same is, also, science or knowledge. It is this Platonic delirium, which makes Origen constantly believe that the Angels, enjoyed within themselves, a portion of the Divinity. He saith, "the reason why I do not adore them, is, because I have thought that, as men are frequently deceived, either by their own ideas, or by the mistakes of others, so amongst the souls, which have quitted the bodies, in which they resided, amongst even the Angels, and the Demons, some may be found, who, seduced by certain probabilities, or led astray by some sophistry, might become capable of pretending to be Gods. Now, as it is difficult for men to unravel all this mystery, the plainest, and best method is, to offer no adoration, to any beings of this order."

against each other. The sincerity of plain dealing was soon sunk amidst the implacable violence which infected the theological disputes. Perplexed in their endeavours to support a set of frivolous and obscure opinions, they were obliged to have recourse to artifice: and as the simplicity of the true Christian doctrine, disdained to mingle with all these cavillings, they counterfeited books, and forged the oracles of the Sibyls. Unfortunately, these illusions were not only elevated into credit, by a false and extravagant zeal; but it too frequently happened, that authors, reputable in every other respect, fell into the snare, and thus, brought into question the truths, which they were anxious to inculcate. It is a matter of concern, to observe such a writer, as Lactantius,<sup>(r)</sup> confidently, quoting passages from the works of Mercurius Trismegistus, and the books of the Erythræan Sibyl; productions acknowledged to have been counterfeited, and in which the forgery betrays itself, by the bad policy of their authors, who were so absurd as to express their meaning, more clearly,

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(r) See Instit. l. 4.



than all the ancient Prophets have expressed theirs.

The misfortune, entailed upon the majority of the Ecclesiastical writers, of the three first ages, of having fallen into some heresy, may be considered as a punishment, inflicted upon them, because they abandoned the simplicities of the Gospel, for the subtleties of the schools. Indeed, not to mention the opinion of the Millenarians, which was, almost generally received amongst them, it is evident, that, at one time, they maintained the Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, into the bodies of animals; (a doctrine embraced by Saint Justin) (*s*) at another time, they asserted, (witness Tertullian) that the soul, and even God were material; (*t*)

and;

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(*s*) “ Qui autem videndi (Deum) facultate indigni judicati sunt, quidnam inquit (Triphon) patiuntur? in aliquo ferarum corpore velut in carcere vinciuntur, atque id supplicium eorum est.” He saith, also, that souls, being created, as the world was created, are, like the world, perishable. “ Quâ de causâ, et moriuntur, et puniuntur.” (Dialog.)

(*t*) “ Nos autem animam corporalem, et hic profiteremur, et in suo volumine probamus habentem proprium genus substantiæ, et soliditatis, per quam quid, et sentire, et pati possit.” And, in another place, “ quis negabit Deum esse corpus? &c.”

and, at another time, they denied, with Arnobius, the creation of man; and invalidated the testimonies from Genesis, relative to the creation of the world. (u) With respect to all this, it may be remarked, that such hath constantly been the fate of those writers, who were free, to follow the bent of their understandings; and that, if the fathers of the church, in these later ages, have not met with the same misfortune, they were, in a  
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(u) See l. 2. *adversus gentes*, where he observes that, perhaps, an infinity of ages hath passed away, since the world was created; that it is impossible to know the designs of God; and sacrilege to believe, that he created men, since experience proves, that they are very wicked, and much inclined to evil.\* It is singular that Arnobius, a well instructed author, and who wrote at the conclusion of the third age, should have been ignorant of the doctrine of original sin.

\* If I am not mistaken, the learned author, in this place, alludes to the following passage in Arnobius: "*sed procul hæc abeat sceleratæ opinionis immanitas, ut Deus credatur omnipotens, magnarum, et invisibilium rerum Sator, et Conditor, Procreator, tam mobiles animas genuisse gravitatis, ac ponderis, constantiæque nullius: in vitia labiles, in peccatorum genera universa declives, &c.*" . . . . . I have taken the liberty to insert the Greek quotations in this last note, according to the original text. It is more than probable that the passages were written in the manuscript copy of this elegant performance, exactly as they are, here, restored, and that the errors and omissions have arisen, solely, from the negligence of the printer. K.

great measure, indebted for an exemption from it, to the advantage of having known the decisions of the Œcumenical church, and to the happy necessity, under which they were laid, of submitting their reason to the canonical decrees. (x)

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(x) Before the patronage of the emperors permitted the bishops to assemble, and form œcumenical councils, there was nothing, which could have served, as an established rule, in the matter of doctrine. The church, had, as yet, no visible chief, whose authority was acknowledged, or confirmed; for, setting aside the privileges, which the bishops of Rome might have claimed, as the successors of St. Peter, it is certain, that they were, in fact, indebted, for their credit, to their position, that is, to the advantage which they enjoyed by keeping their see, at the capital. But, before the emperors had embraced the faith, and, particularly, whilst they persecuted it, this pre-eminence could not have been very distinguished. We may, indeed, perceive that, at the beginning of the fourth age, and at the time of the celebrated quarrel between Donatus, bishop of Casæ Nigræ, and Cæcilian, bishop of Carthage, Melchiades, the bishop, or pope of Rome, (the two words were synonymous) having assembled a council at Rome, the decrees of this council were not observed; so that Constantine was obliged to appoint another council, to meet at Arles, at which council, pope Sylvester did not assist, either in person, or by proxy; nor did he even obtain any intelligence of its decrees, but by common letter of advice, in which neither his assent,

nor

But, although these contradictions somewhat exposed the reputation of the Christian schools, it must be allowed, that they rendered them, from another quarter, very essential services; since the new doctrine amply regained, in a negative sense, the advantages which it lost, in a positive sense. Saint Justin,

Tatian,

nor his approbation were demanded. Eusebius, who enters into a long detail of the history of the Nicene council, doth not appear to pay any attention to the bishop of Rome, and is satisfied with merely observing, that “*Της βασιλεύσεως πολιως ο μνη προεως υστερει δια γηρας; πρεσβυτεροι δ’ αυτε παροντες τη αυτη ταξιν εκπληρουι.* The bishop of the royal city absented himself on account of his great age; some of the elders, however, were present, who supplied his place.” (V. Euseb. a Reading, fol. v. 1. p. 580.) “*Sozomenes hath written nearly to the same effect; Ιουλιος δε οχ δια γηρας απελειμπαται το, but Julius, on account of his great age, was absent.*” (Sozomeni hist. sac. 4. p. 34. c. 17. Reading, v. 2.) If it sometimes happened that the metropolitan churches were referred to, that they might settle particular points of doctrine, this was an advantage, which Rome only enjoyed in common with the rest. Amidst a multitude of authorities, which clearly prove it, I shall cite one, from Tertullian (*de præscriptione*). This author, informing us in what manner heresies are to be distinguished, from the orthodox doctrine, saith, that recourse must be had to the traditions of the church; “*if in Achaia, consult Corinth; if in Macedonia, consult Philippi, and Thessalonica; if in Asia, consult Ephesus; and if in Italy, consult Rome.*”

Tatian, Minutius Felix, Origen, and Lactantius had examined, with the most scrupulous attention, all the dogmas of Paganism; they had dared to pluck aside the veil, which covered this false religion; and as it frequently happens, that ideas, secretly spreading themselves through enlightened and judicious minds, wait but for the moment of liberty, or the daring efforts of some author, before they blaze out, at every point, and avenge the rights of injured reason; so each intelligent individual, who existed at that period, read with avidity these interesting controversies. It is even probable, that whilst such controversies bestowed obligations, by destroying prejudices at once so ridiculous, and deeply rooted, they, at the same time, stamped some degree of favour on the opinions, which were attempted to be established in their place. In cherishing the Christians, men cherished the enemies of the priests; nor were they insensible of the kindness, which they had received from them, by the overthrow of so ancient an imposture. How unfortunate a circumstance must it have proved, if a severe policy had, then, deprived us of those learned productions, to  
which,

which, amidst many other valuable acquisitions, we stand particularly indebted for the precious illustrations of antiquity, and the enlightened memorials of the long empire of superstition! happily, the proscription against books, did not begin till towards the end of the third age; for, although the philosophical emperors, such as Trajan, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius, too rigorously, called to an account, a sect, whom they ought to have tolerated, yet they never levelled their persecutions against the works, which the leaders of this sect had composed. They judged it more becoming, to treat with respect, those mute and peaceable depositaries of the sentiments of mankind; and they regarded them, as sacred asylums, open to every system, whether founded in error, or conceived in the spirit of truth. The Christians exclaimed violently against the new tyranny, to which their books were exposed: they resisted the search of the inquisitors, with the most unshaken resolution, comprising within their anathemas all the *Traditores*, that is, those who were so pusillanimous as to sacrifice their books or bibles to the magistrates.

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As to the rest, Persecution served only to cast an additional lustre over the reputation of the Christians. Under a despotic government, every act of severity is, at once, deemed unjust. And who, indeed, could have beheld without concern, the fate of these unhappy wretches, daily dragged to the tribunal of some freed-man, some creature lifted into place, who, invested with the title either of Pretor, or of Proconsul, concluded that he had a right to give laws to opinion, and pass his judgement on the conscience of another? Thus, all, except those fanatics who had been infected by the suggestions of the priests, pitied and encouraged the Christians, whose writings, every where, recommended that toleration which Jesus Christ had taught them, and which, from the peculiarity of their lot, it was their interest to preach of. They were particularly careful to flee from the presence of tyrannical magistrates; and they travelled into the remotest provinces of the empire, in order to reveal their dogmas to plain and untutored minds. They described a God of peace, a God, who considered all mankind as his children; and who admitted not of any difference

ference between them, whether they were nobles, or plebeians, Romans, or Barbarians, free, or in slavery. Thus, was Christianity extended throughout the provinces, but principally in Spain and Gaul, where it was so generally propagated, that although Constantius, Chlorus, and Constantine, his successor, did not totally embrace it, yet they thought it good policy to countenance it, with their favour, and to avail themselves of it, in opposition to the preponderating influence of Dioclesian and Galerius.

As we have, now, carried our reflections down to that important æra, in which, Constantine, having united in a submission to his laws, the largest empire that ever existed, employed his whole power, to render Christianity the ruling religion, we shall, for a moment, fix our attention on the reign of this prince. Here, then, we conclude our remarks on Christianity, the progress of which ceases to be extraordinary, when directed by the operations of the most powerfully and the most absolute of all the emperors.



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C H A P. IV.*On Constantine.*

**T**HE fourth age of the church opened under the most unfortunate auspices. An empire divided amongst the chiefs of the Barbarians, desolated by continual wars, and ravaged by a foreign army; a religion, at one moment, persecuted by the prince, and at another moment, tearing in pieces her own entrails; now timid, now furious; then weak, then fanatic; either condemned to silence, or lost in heresies, conformably to the caprice of sovereigns, and the revolutions of the state; the destruction of all public morals; licentiousness, or despotism usurping the place of a regular form of government;

ment; and avarice, and depredation seated on the tribunals, compose the objects which fill up the picture, presented to us, by the Roman empire, or rather, by the whole world. During this dreadful chaos, during this total overthrow of power and opinion, mankind waited in expectation of a master; one of those ferocious warriors, who, whilst he remained too formidable to dread an opposition from the people, might prove equally invincible against the attacks of rival nations, was all they asked for. Although no longer desirous of liberty, yet they were anxious to enjoy peace; the vigour of their minds was already bent; their intrepidity was exhausted; and whatsoever might have been the will of a despot, an universal principle of adulation was prepared to adopt it. Dioclesian alike wearied with battles and with glory; at once loathing the occupations of a general, and the employments of a sovereign; but particularly displeas'd with the Romans, whose baseness, and ingratitude he had experienced, despis'd the lustre, and apprehended the dangers, which surrounded the throne of the world, and this too, at a time when he was, of all others, the most

worthy of filling it. Unfortunately, he foresaw not, until it was too late, the part which he was obliged to take; but like a commander, who dismantles the conquered place before it be abandoned, he rendered the post which he quitted, impossible to be maintained. The empire was divided into four *dioceses*, or governments. An illusory ballance of power had been established, amongst the chiefs, who under the titles of either Cæsar, or Augustus, presided over the several departments. The colleagues, united only by illegal marriages, or forced adoptions, unavoidably, became mutual rivals; and he who, first, triumphed over his competitor, was sure of investing himself, shortly afterwards, with the rank, and authority of an universal monarch. It was under these circumstances, that Constantine, in the flower of his age, and adorned with all the gifts of nature, inherited a power, which Constantius, his father, had made a favourite and desirable object. To reign, was, in fact, to wage war. His first exploits were directed against the Franks. A conqueror beyond the Rhine, a peaceable sovereign amongst the Gauls, he, quickly, fixed his views on Italy.

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There, the sway of Maxentius was grown detestable. At once, cruel, and superstitious, whilst he consulted the oracles, his hands were imbrued in human blood. This period was the empire of magic. Every place was filled with the accounts of evocations, of sacrifices, and of predictions. Whether, as Eusebius saith, Constantine, intimidated by the enchantments of Maxentius, sought after other arms, wherewith to oppose him; or whether his acquaintance with the disposition of a people, irritated by persecutions, and inclined towards christianity, inspired him with the idea of placing his support, upon a new religion, it is certain that he was eager in testifying his aversion from those false deities, and his attachment to the mode of worship, peculiar to the Christians.

Nothing can be more obscure, than the history of the *Labarum*, or cross, which appeared to Constantine, whilst he marched at the head of his army. What hath been written, either to confirm, or to confute this circumstance, may be seen in a work published by *Mr. Le Beau.*(y) I presume it to

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(y) Hist. du bas Emp. tom. 1.

be exceedingly clear, that the period, and the place, at which this event happened, are equally uncertain. Not only Origen, but all the profane historians are silent, on the subject. (z) Even *Eusebius* doth not relate it, as a fact generally known, but as an incident mentioned to him by Constantine ; (a) neither was there any visible trace of the prodigious effect, which such a miracle ought to have produced, since the army of this prince, still remained devoted to Paganism, and since he himself

(z) The author might have excepted the learned writers of the Universal History, whose credulity, and complaisance have implicitly adopted from *Eusebius*, an account which that father only believed in part. K.

(a) *Quod si quidem ab alio quopiam diceretur, haud facile auditores fidem essent habituri. (De vita Constantini, lib. 1. cap. 38.* It is certain, that if *Eusebius* imagined that he was relating a fact, as sufficiently known, and as generally confessed as this ought to have been, he would not either have written with so much precaution, or have begun with agreeing, that if any other, except Constantine, had mentioned this circumstance, his audience would not have given him much credit. Thus the whole authenticity of this narrative, is confined to the testimony of two persons; the one, probably instigated either by enthusiasm, or policy; and the other engaged by situation, and interest, to receive the story, as a truth.

himself did not declare that he was become a Christian, until some time afterwards. It is not, therefore, without reason, that this history hath been often called in question, and considered as a *pious fraud*,<sup>(b)</sup> which is the worst of all falsties, because by poisoning even the very source of truth, it exposes the most sacred authorities, to all those doubts which profane writers are so ready to cast upon them. But, whatever may have happened, it is a positive truth, that Constantine granted to the Christians, a protection so strikingly marked, that the first use, which he made of his victory over Maxentius, was to engage Licinius to proclaim an act of toleration in their favour.

It is at this period, that we may fix the beginning of the epoch, which we should stile the fine age of the church, if the disputes, the cabals, the schisms, and the cruel and extravagant errors, with which he was agitated, had not tarnished the lustre of these prosperous days. Here, bishops accused bishops of having stolen the sacred vessels, whilst a woman gave away the chief see in Africa.

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(b) See Echard's Roman history.

There, Christians, scarcely escaped from one persecution, carried on a second, still more cruel than the first, against themselves, by turns reproaching one another, either with desertion, or with treason.(c) And here, a set of zealots, less ambitious indeed, but more fanatic, had substituted barbarity in the place of outrage: it is impossible to reflect without horror, on those heretics, called *Circumcelliones*, a kind of Maniacs, who, mistaking the words, *praise be to God*, for a signal to rally together, and not daring to transgress the precept of the gospel, which forbade them to draw the sword, knocked down with clubs, all those who refused to embrace their tenets; and were sometimes so transported with madness, as to precipitate themselves into the sea; as if there had been contagions, peculiar to the mind, as well as the body; and as if cruelty towards others, and towards themselves, had been as much a disease attending on the ignorant and superstitious man, as the leprosy is a disorder, which naturally visits the poor and the uncleanly man. No church enjoyed tranquility, no  
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(c) See Hist. eccl. de Fleury tom. 2.

Asylum remained, in which peace, and charity could have resided; for, although the controversies which disturbed Asia, were not attended with such cruel effects, as those controversies by which the East, Europe, and Africa were torn, yet they were much more vain and frivolous. I am pleased with that ingenuous manner, in which Eusebius writes, when he relates those quarrels, which arose, at the time, when the passover was to be celebrated. "Every one (saith he) differed in opinion, from another; no two persons could agree about the ceremonies of religion, nor was an individual found, who knew what remedy to apply; for amidst such a multitude of different counsels, there was not the least reason advanced, why the scale should be inclined more to the one, than to the other side."(d)

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(d) "Itaque cum omnes ubique populi jam dudum inter se diffident, et sacri religionis nostræ ritus conturbarentur, mortalium quidem nemo erat qui huic malo remedium posset adhibere, cum utrinque inter se dissentientes velut æquatâ lancê controversia penderet."

I cannot resist the opportunity of introducing, on this occasion, a passage from Arnobius, which seems to be exceedingly



And yet, these internal disorders did not prevent Christianity from acquiring fresh vigour. In spite of a reciprocal hatred, in spite of a diversity of opinions, the favour of the sovereign, and the extinction of Paganism, was, as it were, the rallying point, to which every sect equally tended. The ecclesiastical authority hath never been refused to those princes, who countenanced the ecclesiastics. Constantine, scarcely a Catechumen, and as yet half a Barbarian, stained in his reputation, by several parricides, and surrounded with concubines, and an illegitimate offspring, was soon considered as an oracle, in all mat-  
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exceedingly judicious. \* " Where (saith he, b. 2.) is the opinion, so rational, and so plausible, that the spirit of controversy cannot shake it? can any position be so absurd, as to render specious arguments, incapable of supporting it? when a person is once convinced, either of the truth, or of the falsity of any thing,  
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\* *Quid est enim quod humana ingenia labefactare studio contradictionis non audeant? quamvis illud quod infirmare moluntur, sit purum, et liquidum, et veritatis obfignatione munitum? aut quid rursus asserere verisimilibus argumentis non queunt, quamvis sit apertissime falsum, quamvis evidens, manifestumque mendacium? cum enim sibi persuaserit quis esse aliquid, aut non esse, amat quod opinatur asserere, et acumine alios antecire, maxime si agatur res sumptuosa, et abdita, et caligine involuta nature. Arnob. l. 2.*

ters relating to doctrine. His mediation was invoked, during each controversy, and his presence was desired at every council. Nay, to such a length were these things carried, that he was requested to deliver out sermons and pastoral instructions. The reward of so much adulation was the prescription pronounced soon afterwards against the Gods, their temples, and their ministers. Christianity oppressed, preached in favour of toleration; but Christianity, when rendered the ruling religion, became intolerant in her turn; and the bishops, at once forgetting the precepts

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he, immediately, from a passion for disputation, becomes attached to his own idea, and soon seeks, solely, to acquire a superiority over his adversary, by dint of the powers of the imagination, and by subtlety; especially when some obscure question, involved by its nature, in darkness, is the point in debate." Such remarks frequently fall from the pen of this excellent author. It were to be wished that those, who, like him, have written in favour of religion, had been guided by the same spirit of discernment and toleration. Bold, and earnest, whilst he refutes paganism, and the ancient philosophy; modest, and cautious, whensoever new doctrines are to be established, reducing all to the belief of ONE ONLY GOD, and to the practice of the natural law, he hath proved himself as much a friend to inquisitive doubt, as an enemy to superstition.

cepts of the gospel, and their own true interests, in order to subdue their enemies, furnished the civil power with those arms, against the use of which, they had so long inveighed. They went still farther; and even these men, who believed also in Jesus Christ, who followed the same discipline, and observed the same ceremonies, but who differed concerning some abstruse, and speculative opinion, could not make a proper use of that toleration, which had been granted to the heathens, but some years before. The same emperor, who in his first edict, in favour of the Christians, had said, in express terms: "it is our will, that such as follow the errors of the Gentiles, should enjoy the same tranquility, and the same repose which the faithful enjoy; and we esteem this reciprocal toleration, to be the best mean of propagating the truth. Let no one, therefore, presume to molest his fellow creature; let every person live as he pleaseth; and let those, who chuse to adhere to a false religion, not only enjoy their forms of worship, but their temples." The same Constantine, when some time had elapsed, issued an edict against the heretics, in which he forbids them to have any oratories, and even acquaints

acquaints them, that they must not dare to assemble on any pretext whatsoever.<sup>(e)</sup> He sent soldiers into all the provinces of the empire, to pull down the temples, to break their idols in pieces, to imprison their priests, and to disperse their worshippers; and whilst he thus established his tenets, by fire and the sword, he was himself incessantly changing; perpetually passing over from one party, to the other party; and preaching, and inculcating contradictory doctrines, until, at length, forgetting, through the excess of zeal, to be baptized, he died an heretic.

To draw aside the mask, beneath which feeble humanity hath frequently remained hidden, is constantly a painful employment; but howsoever odious it may be in society, in all historical researches, it is at once noble and useful. In fact, if the ordinary course of justice requires that a slow and impartial examination should rise up, after a long series of years, to redress her errors, how much more is history, placed at first between the sycophant, and the carping sophister, and then delivered over to the blind compiler,

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<sup>(e)</sup> See Euseb. de vita Const. l. 2. c. 46. and l. 3. c. 66.

entitled to enter her protest, against the sentence of the past ages? Constantine, by throwing down the idols, had often applauded himself, for having convinced the people, that these splendid images, far from proving asylums to the divinities, contained only despicable ashes, or the tainted bones of dead bodies; but little did he perceive that thus he insulted over his own destiny. The task of daring to penetrate into his soul, was reserved for this enlightened age. The idol being overthrown, and its rich covering destroyed, what then remains? self-interest, passions, hypocrisy, and the whole skeleton of humanity. Constantine is, of all princes, he who hath the most influenced the ages which succeeded that age wherein he existed. The objects to which he consecrated his reign were the destruction of the worship of false deities, in order to substitute in its place, the worship of Jesus Christ; and the transportation of the capital of the world, from the ancient theatre of her glory, to a barbarous and uncultivated shore. The last step hath not met with any apologists; but the first step, by endearing his memory to the Christian world, hath probably cast upon the author, too much  
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of the merit of the work. As for us, equally removed from the bitterness of Zosimus, and the enthusiasm of Eusebius, we shall not borrow opinions from these authors, but only facts. We shall even rest satisfied, with having placed the reader, in a situation, to judge for himself; and to follow a surer road, in our observations, we shall examine Constantine, under three different points of view; as a man, as a prince, and as a Christian.

Were it necessary for the religion of Christ, to borrow some lustre from her followers, we should not have confessed, but with uneasiness, how much we are constrained to acknowledge an extreme difference, between the great and sublime minds of *Trajan*, and the *Antonini*, and the yet barbarous character of *Constantine*: but the faith inculcated by the ministers of the gospel, hath nothing in common with the personal vices of this prince; vices at once so striking, and so odious, that we can neither justify, nor dissemble them. Perhaps, indeed, he ought, in some measure, to be pitied, for having been hurried away by the manners of his times, whilst he treated with so much cruelty, the people of Germany, whom he had conquered: but what pardon can be granted

granted to those writers, who, notwithstanding that they were commendable in every other respect, instead of lamenting over these horrid perpetrations, have striven to palliate, and, as it were, to filch away the atrocity that stained them? I cannot, in this place, avoid quoting a passage from Mr. Crevier; it may serve as an instance of the manner, after which, history is written in our times. "Constantine (saith he) passed the Rhine, and entered into the country of the *Brueteri*, whom he gave up *to the fire, and the sword*. Nothing was spared. The villages were burnt; the cattle were taken, or slaughtered; *the men and women were massacred*; and they, who escaped death, and whom he made prisoners, underwent a fate still more cruel. As he judged them incapable of ever performing the least useful service to the cause, on account of their ungovernable fierceness, and their perfidy, they were thrown to the wild beasts, whose ferocity they imitated."*(f)*

What an artifice! what an effort to soften such abominable crimes! and all this, because

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*(f)* Eusebius relates this fact with the same indulgence. See de vitâ Const. l. 1. c. 25.

Constantine was the first Christian emperor. A partiality so peculiar to historians, sometimes becomes amusing, when it is not exerted on subjects which seem to rise against it. Amidst so much guilt, a simple homicide, though indeed exceedingly useless, and unmerited, may be considered as a trifle; but I cannot help taking under my protection, an unfortunate eunuch, for whom *Mr. Le Beau*, and *Mr. Crevier* have shewn no compassion. *Constantine* had strong reasons to suspect his father-in-law *Maximian*; but he had determined to delay executing his revenge on him, until he should have taken him in an attempt to commit the fact. Having, therefore, been one day informed by his wife *Fausta*, that *Maximian* was to fulfil his intentions, on the following night, and stab him in his bed, he placed in it an eunuch, without doubt, a contemptible creature, yet, at the same time, very innocent; and one who had nothing to do there. *Maximian* is deceived, and whilst he only kills the eunuch, supposes that he slays a son-in-law. *Constantine* then steps forward, overwhelmed with joy at the discovery, and orders his father-in-law to be immediately put to death, to the great satisfaction of his wife,



wife, and all the assistants. Is it possible, that no historian should have been induced to remark, that it would have been better not to have taken away the life of a blameless individual; and to have saved his father from the commission of an additional crime, and himself from the guilt of parricide? but I am in the wrong to expect that a poor eunuch, should be mentioned with any pity, whilst the same historians have expressed none for *Cæsar Valens*, and *Cæsar Martinianus*, whose only crime was, the having been raised to the first rank by *Licinius*; and whilst, also, they have shewn as little commiseration, even for *Licinius*, who, during a long time, coequal with *Constantine*, and, at length, fallen within his power, though under the sanction of a treaty, was shortly afterwards condemned to death, upon the most frivolous pretexts. The execution of an *Augustus*, and of the two *Cæsars*; the violation of the public faith; and treaties, either forgotten, or broken, are all as nothing, for an emperor, who protected bishops, and composed homilies.

What crimes could have been added to these, unless they amounted to the having put to death a wife, and a son? and under what

what circumstances were such cruelties committed? *Constantine* returned in triumph from the *Nicean* council; he was congratulating himself on having given a dinner to more than three hundred bishops, and kissed the wounds of martyrs; when, on a sudden, hurried away by mere suspicions, and from the single imputation of a crime, the hardest to be believed, he put to death his son *Crispus*,<sup>(g)</sup> a youth of the most promising hopes. Shortly afterwards, turning his fury from the accused, to the accuser, he ordered that the empress *Fauſta* should be ſuffocated. The ties of friendship were, in his eſtimation, no ſurer ſafeguards than the ties of blood. This ferocious, and irregular prince, all occupied as he was in accelerating the progreſs of Chriſtianity, had invited to his court, *Zopater*, a Platonic philoſopher, of the ſchool of *Jamblicus*. He ſoon permitted him to enjoy ſo great a ſhare of his confidence, and intimacy, that the unfortunate ſage, deluded

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(g) It is remarkable, that *Eusebius*, fearful of throwing too dark a ſhade over his beautiful picture of *Constantine*, hath not taken the leaſt notice of the death, or rather murder of *Crispus*, who was compelled to ſwallow poiſon. K.

away from his own country, could not escape the jealousy of the Christians. Accusations of sorcery and magic had been whispered abroad, and a popular commotion had already risen, when the fleet, which was to import the corn from Ægypt, became detained by contrary winds. The people, constantly furious, and driven almost to madness, whensoever factious and interested men alarm their minds with apprehensions of a famine,<sup>(b)</sup> did not fail to direct their fury against *Zopater*; whilst *Constantine*, at once a weak prince, and a perfidious friend, delivered up to execution this innocent philosopher. To a character so cruel, and inconstant, may be added an unbridled passion for ostentatious pomp, and an immoderate thirst after every kind of glory: from such marks, it is but too easy to discover, in the person of *Constantine*, an odious and contemptible individual; whose vices, the lustre of the purple, the laurels of victory, and the adulation of ages, have long striven to conceal. Let us now examine whether the prince hath a better title to our esteem.

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(b) Tacitus, somewhere saith, "Plebs cui una ex republica annonæ cura."

In this case, facts seem to speak for themselves. *Constantine*, born in the very midst of dangers; exposed from his infancy, in the character of an hostage, to all the hatred of his enemies; and at length, escaping from their hands, at the hazard of his life, no sooner perceives himself placed at the head of an army, than, being the absolute master of an extensive part of the empire, he attempts to conquer the other part, and to seat himself on the throne of the world. What success could have been more brilliant? what a subject for panegyric! but the philosopher, who is never dazzled by the mere splendor of actions, soon withdraws his admiration, when directing his researches up to the origin of victories, he beholds only a series of battles gained. He is convinced, that from the moment, at which men began to repose their whole trust and interest in their armies, it must necessarily have happened, that the event of battles, decided either in favour of the one, or of the other; that the advantages acquired by war, may be of high relative value, but of very little positive value; and that signal successes do not always form great generals. A player at chess may take another

less strong than himself, and yet be very weak. In India, for instance, we know that entire empires have been overthrown, by armies, who might have been forced to flee, before six battalions of *European* troops. It is not because he defeated the duke de *Bourbonville*; but because he harrassed *Condé*, and *Montecuculli*, that *Turenne* is esteemed a great general.<sup>(i)</sup> So also, in politics, the citizen, who by dint of firmness and intrepidity, attains to the power of adding some advantage to public liberty, is more respectable than the prince, who, at the head of fifty satellites, makes a people of slaves exchange one master for another master.

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(i) The Chevalier Folard mentions this campaign, fatal to *Turenne*, with that enthusiasm, to which the merits of the French general, and his almost-equally illustrious competitor had so strong a claim. “ Celle ci fût le chef d’oeuvre du Vicomte de *Turenne*, et du Comte de *Montecuculli*; il n’y en a point de si belle dans l’antiquité; il n’y a que les experts dans le métier qui puissent en bien juger.” *Montecuculli*, who, after the death of *Turenne*, quitted the profession of a soldier, gave this remarkable reason for his retirement. “ The man who has had the honour to engage with *Turenne*; must not venture his reputation against those who are but beginning to command armies.” K.

For *Constantine* to have vanquished *Licinius*, and to have triumphed over some barbarous nations, is, without doubt, no inconsiderable circumstance; and yet the little glory which he receives from it, can only last, whilst we continue ignorant of the choice of his means, and the sagacity of his views. But this emperor, by placing his conduct in a more interesting light, hath given us a standard, whereby we may judge of him. He acted as a legislator; nor will the reader find it difficult to determine, whether our severity be misplaced, should he recollect that it is this prince, to whom we owe that vicious mixture of the *civil power*, and the *ecclesiastical power*, which hath scattered so much disorder, during fifteen centuries, throughout the Christian world.

The first traces of the intervention of the ecclesiastical power, in civil matters, may be found in a law, enacted by *Constantine*, and relative to the enfranchisement of slaves. In the room of those formalities, with which these enfranchisements were accompanied, he directed that the attestation of a bishop should, from that time forward, be deemed sufficient; as if the proceedings and deci-

sions were to be determined upon, like cases of conscience, or acts of penance.<sup>(k)</sup> Every one recollects into how large a field this first encroachment began to spread. All the different ways and means were immediately settled; innumerable privileges were granted to the clergy; such as, a permission to receive legacies; an exemption from all burdensome offices, namely, the collection of the taxes, municipal posts, magistracies, guardianships, &c. so excessive were these favours, that, interest soon checking enthusiasm, it became necessary to revoke them.

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(k) One might reasonably suspect *Constantine* to have been actuated by some secret motives, when he made this regulation. A multitude of slaves, attracted by that spirit of equality, which reigned amongst the Christians, presented themselves daily, and by embracing their religion, broke loose from the power of their respective masters. These deserters were, notwithstanding, to be given up, whensoever they were demanded; but however slight the pretext for their enfranchisement might have been, the favour granted to the new converts gave birth to decisions, subversive of the authority of the masters. Now, it is probable, that, to extend this favour, still farther, endeavours were used to deprive the civil power of the privilege of carrying on any process of this kind, and to render the attestation of the bishop, which might always be depended upon, sufficient of itself, without any other forms.

In fact, almost every one of the citizens, to secure his effects, turned ecclesiastic; and God was so well served, that the state no longer enjoyed either subjects,<sup>(1)</sup> or magistrates. Amongst all princes, the interests of their treasury or exchequer, have, as it were, fixed bounds to their faith: but, however unwilling *Constantine* might have been to give way to the clergy, in a point of such importance, he was not afraid of sacrificing to them the most ancient principles of the Roman government, by revoking the *lex Papia Poppæa*. By this law, the unmarried citizens were cut off from all collateral successions; and the married citizens, who had no children, could only claim the half of

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(1) Under *Constantine*, the number of the citizens was much diminished, whilst the number of slaves, and of foreigners, was considerably increased. It is, not, therefore, extraordinary that the weight of taxes, and all public charges bore hard upon each individual. The municipal employments were, in particular, such heavy burdens, that, in the end, there remained neither landed property, nor personal property. All those who, by their situation, were obliged to fill some public office, were called *Curiales*. Now, the rank of *Curialis*, and any ecclesiastical rank, were, by the principles of the church, deemed incompatible. See Bingham's antiquities of the church. b. 5. c. 3.



such of these successions, as might have fallen to them; neither were they entitled to more than the tenth part, of the effects of their wives, in case of their decease. *Constantine*, not contented with having extinguished these respectable remains of Roman policy, encouraged celibacy, by every possible mean; and, in particular, granted to such, as embraced this state, the privilege of disposing of their possessions, previous to the age required by the laws.

But, whilst these exemptions were multiplied, in favour of the clergy, a new kind of exorbitant taxes, spread the greatest consternation amongst the people. Every fourth year, the officers belonging to the emperor, came, armed with whips and sticks, to collect a capitation, called *chrysfargyrum*, because it was paid, either in gold, or in silver. This tax was levied with the most unparalleled rigour. Even beggars and prostitutes were forced to contribute their share; but the poor, hunted from place to place, and lashed about, like common beasts of burden, were not the only individuals, who groaned under these extortions; the rich apprehended them, with an equal degree of terror; since accu-  
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fations of every kind, domestic treachery, and public calumny, formed, as it were, the tariff; in which they were accustomed to perceive them entered.

*Zosimus*, also, accuses *Constantine*, of having waged war, against the Pagan deities, only that he might be furnished with a pretence, for pillaging their temples; but it would be unjust to rely upon an author, who appears, by several passages in his writings, to have been greatly prejudiced; and particularly, when he imputes the conversion of *Constantine*, to the remorse with which the murder of his wife, and son, afflicted him. According to this historian, the emperor, having fought, to no purpose, amongst the heathen priests, for proper expiations, became a convert to the religion of the Christians, who were reported to have practised a ceremony, of washing away all sins, in a mysterious water. But, however gross the anachronism may be, of referring the conversion of *Constantine*, to an event, which happened so long afterwards, it is, notwithstanding, very evident, that the crimes with which he had lately blackened his conduct, added to his inflexible persecution, against opinions generally

rally received, and a mode of worship, of such an ancient establishment, had rendered him so odious to his people, that he was obliged to quit Rome, and find out another asylum, where only the voice of flattery could be heard: upon which, I shall beg leave to remark, that the ideas, relative to an exterior form of adoration, must have had a terrible influence over morality; since on one side, the Christians have commended, even to the skies, an emperor, who was guilty of the most atrocious crimes; whilst, on the other side, the *Romans*, who applauded *Nero*, when he made his entry into their capital, after having put his mother to death, could not bear the sight of *Constantine*, by whose order, his own wife and son were executed. It is thus, that an attachment to empty rites and ceremonies, perpetually prevails over that law, which nature hath engraven on every human heart, but unfortunately, in characters too superficial, and too easy to be obliterated.

We will not expatiate upon that absurd error, which *Constantine* committed, when he changed the metropolis of the empire. It is a circumstance too well known, and too fully

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acknowledged, by all authors, not excepting those authors, who have the most commended this prince. We have already mentioned the reasons, which induced him to take so false a step; but we cannot avoid adding, that no project could possibly have been conceived, more in the spirit of pride, or executed more in the spirit of injustice. Whilst this ostentatious emperor is so impatient to enjoy his palaces, that he doth not allow his architects, even time to construct them, in a manner sufficiently substantial; and whilst he perceives his already mouldering walls, threatening to fall on those walls, which are yet rising; he compels, by severe edicts, all the inhabitants of *Asia-Minor* to erect expensive edifices in the new capital. A tyrannical law enacts, that all persons, not having an house at *Constantinople*, should be prohibited from transmitting any landed estate to their heirs: by such means doth he accelerate the building of this celebrated city, the horoscope of which is cast, by his orders; and the result of this, is, a prophecy that it will last, during the space of six hundred and ninety-six years.

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The reader will, probably, be somewhat surprized to find, that so excellent a divine, as *Constantine*, should have been induced to consult the astrologers; but the character of this prince appears, in no particular, so inconsistent, as in that particular, which hath any the least relation to religion. Equally weak and vain, and as ready to preserve, as to change his resolution, the imperfections of his mind have accounted for the imperfections of his heart. Whether this prince was an enthusiast, or an hypocrite, is a question, which hath been often agitated. One party, stricken with that frequently particular attention, which made him descend into all the *minutiae* of ecclesiastical matters; with that hatred which he had conceived against Paganism; and, above all, with the devotion, which he discovered, in the last moments of his life, have imagined that he was more convinced, than enlightened; and that if the grace of God did not esteem it fitting, to support him against heresy, and parricide, at least, it revealed to him, the principal tenets of the faith. The other party, more attentive to his public conduct, to the pretended miracles, with which he accompanied

compained his expeditions; and, especially, to the advantages, which he drew from them, seem inclined to believe, that he never had a very lively faith, and that his religion was, constantly, kept dependant on his ambition. As for me, I know not, if it arise from my bearing a stronger antipathy against hypocrisy, than against any other vice; but I am always averse from supposing, that it can be carried on to a certain degree: to act the part of an hypocrite, seems to me, a task, at once, so painful, and so difficult, that nothing but the most violent effort of patience and artifice, can support a long and successful performance of it. Let us always be fearful of giving too much to the mind, by taking too much away from the heart. If we enjoy some talents, wherewith we deceive others, how many more talents do we not possess, which seduce us to impose upon ourselves? the willingness with which we are so apt to credit the supposed exertions of hypocrisy, may, perhaps, arise from the not having sufficiently reflected on the nature of the human heart. All who have observed the empire, which our interest maintains over our opinions, must have met with ample reason to  
be

be convinced, that its own successes soon prove the means of its destruction. We lead off, by dishonestly affecting certain practices and sentiments; and when this imposture hath brought us within the reach of playing some great part; of commanding mankind, and of receiving from them riches and consequence, we begin to repose in it more trust; and it, at length, happens that, by little and little, our interest attains to the power of consolidating, in our mind, the basis of our authority. It is an old remark, that gamblers begin by being dupes, and end by being knaves: in matters of opinion, the case is reversed; and we begin by being knaves, and end by being dupes. How often doth the magistrate, in passing from one court into another court, change his principles, with his tribunal! at first, his probity, or rather the opinion which he hath conceived of himself, becomes restless and uneasy; it, then, calls to its assistance, sophistry and subtlety; but, quickly duped by its own artifice, it no longer finds any thing to contend with, and the man is rendered a convert to vertue, through his own folly. It is thus, that amongst the clergy, it hath sometimes happened;

happened, that a set of ecclesiastics, entirely abandoned to wordly views, and raised to dignities, either through favour or intrigue; then, becoming the chiefs of a party, and frequently constrained to sacrifice their pleasures to their ambition, have ended by adopting, as an article of their own belief, some portion of that which they would willingly have persuaded others to believe. We mention this to the honour of christianity; the moral system of which could never have united itself to those atrocious crimes, which *Constantine* committed; and had God Himself enlightened him; had He chosen to have made use of him, any otherwise than He made use of a Tiberius, or a Nero, who, doubtless, were subservient to the accomplishment of his purposes, He would not have exposed him to the disgrace of having incessantly dishonoured the faith, by his actions, and betrayed it, by his errors.

*Constantine*, according to all appearances, was induced to favour Christianity, by those reasons, which we have explained, in a former part of this chapter. But soon encouraged by success; elated with pride, by the flattery, which he received from the bishops; and,



and, above all, prompted by jealousy, to change the seat of the empire, he felt, at length, a real zeal, in favour of those tenets, which, at the opening, he had espoused, from principles of interest. It is easy to trace this conduct, in his mode of proceeding towards a general reformation. At first, he thought it enough to tolerate Christianity; but he, soon afterwards, made Christianity the reigning and exclusive religion. Although humble and submissive to the bishops, at the beginning, yet he did not wait long, before he gave them lessons, in their turn. We may perceive how his zeal daily increased, with his influence over ecclesiastical affairs. No method, no rule actuated his judgments; at one moment, a moderator, and at another moment, a persecutor; now, he imposes silence on *Alexander*, and on *Arius*; then he condemns *Arius*; then absolves him; then, condemns him again; and after all this, concludes with adopting his principles. I beg leave to insert the introduction of a letter, which he wrote, at the same time to *Alexander*, bishop of *Alexandria*, and to *Arius*, who was then disputing  
against

against him. (*m*) “ Since you, *Alexander*, have required from your clergy their sentiments concerning some particular passages of scripture, or rather concerning some empty and frivolous opinions ; and since you, *Arius*, have agitated questions, on which you ought never to have meditated, or meditating, to have remained silent, discord hath been stirred up amongst you, &c. &c. .... Abandon, therefore, these subtleties in a matter which doth not admit either of a question or of an answer.” Now, these subtleties, these empty and frivolous queries, related to nothing less, than the consubstantiality of the word, on which occasion an assembly was called, soon after the council of *Nice*.

*Constantine* was not more fortunate, in his treatises on the Christian religion. Let such, as have any curiosity, to perceive the height of extravagance and absurdity, united together

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(*m*) Cum enim tu, *Alexander*, a presbiteris tuis requireres quid unusquisque eorum de quodam legis loco sentiret, seu potius de quâdam inani questione eos interrogares; cumque tu, *Ari*, id quod nunquam cogitatum, vel sanè cogitatum silentio premere deberes, imprudenter excitata inter vos discordia, &c. .... Quidnam verò illud est? nec interrogare de hujusmodi rebus, nec interrogatum respondere, &c.

gether, peruse the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth chapters of his discourse, addressed to the assembly of the saints, (*Oratio ad Sanctorum coetum.*) After having quoted as authentic, an acrostic, by the pretended Erythræan Sibyl, the initial letters of which, form the words, *Jesus Christus Dei Filius, Servator*, as if God revealed the secrets of futurity, in quirks of wit, which barely deserve a place amidst the common doggerel of a news-paper, he seizes on *Virgil*, as an immense treasure of the clearest prophecies, in support of the Christian religion. Amongst other eclogues, he cites,

*Sicelides Musæ, paulò majora canamus.*

Even *paulò majora*, (saith he) alludes to many particulars. But *Virgil*, then adds,

*Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas.*

Who doth not know that the *Cumæan Sibyl* ceased to prophesy, when the *Truth* himself came into the world? but what answer can be given to these verses?

*Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo,  
Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna.*

Who

Who is this returning virgin, unless it be the Mother of God? doth not the poet himself say?

*Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum  
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,  
Casta fave Lucina, &c.*

Was not this, word for word, the Messiah?  
*Doctè igitur hæc dicta sunt, 'O Maro poetarum  
sapientissime! . . . . . &c. &c.*

*Constantine* firmly believed that *Virgil* was a christian; but he imagined, that this celebrated poet was obliged to disguise his faith, and conceal his allusions behind the veil of allegory. *Eusebius*, who introduces the whole of this discourse, and without making any observations on it, seems to be of the same opinion. What then must have been the logic of the first sages of the church, which made them consider *Moses* and the *Sibyls*, *Isaac* and *Virgil*, in the same point of view? but as these reflexions are foreign to my subject, I shall immediately conclude with observing, that *Constantine*, having lived in the perpetration of guilt, and died an heretic, is unworthy of our encomiums, either as a *Man*, a *Prince*, or a *Christian*.

## C H A P. V.

*On the influence of Christianity over the happiness of the people. The situation of mankind, from the reign of Constantine, to the destruction of the Western empire.*

**H**AVING mentioned the establishment of the Christian religion; and having drawn, with all the accuracy in our power, the picture of the sovereign, who imparted to it so supreme an authority, throughout his extensive dominions; it seems natural to examine, in what manner the felicity of the people was influenced by these important alterations. And here, truth would not have presumed to raise her rigid voice, if the Apostles of Christianity had ever pretended, that the temporary  
happiness

happiness of human life was the object to which the views of their religion were directed. Idly would men alledge against this religion, the destruction of those nations, who embraced it, and the downfall of the Roman empire, at a period so little distant from its conversion. The church, in her infancy, never extended her considerations towards the glory and prosperity of states. Humility, poverty, penitence, and prayer, were all which the ministers of the gospel thought themselves commissioned to inculcate; and far from endeavouring, like the Pagans, to assimilate the mode of worship, with the system of polity, and to make each jointly conspire, in promoting the happiness of nations, they gloried in a contempt of all vain grandeur, persuaded as they were, that the theatre of the world must fall, before the scenes performing on it could find sufficient time to draw to a conclusion.

We have already spoken of the error peculiar to the Millenarians; and so common during the first ages of the church. Whilst heresies, springing up with the primitive dogmas of the faith, tore the bosom of Christianity; whilst the most orthodox emperors,

governed by their eunuchs, pusillanimously deserted the defence of their frontiers; and whilst the Barbarians, rushing in from the extremities of the universe, were sprinkling with human blood, the provinces of the empire, the principal cities of which were frequently either set on fire by the volcanos, or demolished by earthquakes, the opinion generally propagated, that the world was going to be destroyed, was received with a still greater degree of credit; and if the Pagans continued obstinately bent on rejecting this opinion, it was because they had ascribed so many disasters to the defection from an ancient and revered system of worship. At this dreadful crisis, during these common lamentations, the defenders of Christianity formed two divisions. The first division consisted of those, who, above concealing the miseries, with which they were laden; and even striving to exaggerate the consequences, drew from these events, fresh motives to enforce a more extensive conversion. The second division, unwilling to make the least allowance in favour of Paganism, pretended that the then impending evils were not more calamitous, than the evils which afflicted the  
people,

people, during the ages of idolatry. To the invasions of the Barbarians, they opposed the civil wars and the proscriptions; to the frequent destructions, whether of *Antiocb*, or *Edeffa*, or *Constantinople*, &c. &c. they compared the remarkable eruption of *Vesuvius*, during the reign of *Titus*. *Saint Augustin*, drawing all his arguments from his religion, wrote his elegant treatise, *de civitate Dei*, in which he proves, that the kingdom of God was not to be made manifest in this world. *Paulus Orosius* also composed his cold and tiresome chronicle, in which, however inaccurate his relation of the principal historical facts may prove, he hath but too well succeeded, in convincing us, that, of all creatures, human beings have constantly been the most unfortunate.

Every one, the least acquainted with history, must recollect, that no ages were more fertile in disasters, than the ages which filled up the intervals, between the first invasion of the Barbarians, and their absolute establishment in the country which they had conquered. But it is easy to perceive, that in order to follow the plan, which we have adopted, it is necessary, that we should remove to a



distance from our observations, all physical events, such as earthquakes, famine, contagions, &c. and the greater part of political incidents, such as the unfortunate successes of war, the misconduct of generals, the want of discipline amongst troops, &c. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that, whatsoever religion might have prevailed, throughout the Roman empire, the effeminacy of the people, the licentiousness of the soldiers, and the despotism of the emperors, must sooner, or later, have drawn it on, towards its destruction. But, the power of religion, embracing, as it were, the majority of civil and moral actions, it may be asked, whether, since the establishment of Christianity, mankind have been more virtuous, and more happy; whether sovereigns have been less covetous, and less sanguinary; whether the people have been more submissive, and more quiet; whether crimes have been less numerous, and punishments less cruel; whether the progress of war hath been conducted with more humanity; and whether treaties have been more scrupulously observed?

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We could wish, not for the honour of Christianity, which doth not stand in need of human consideration, but for our own satisfaction, that we were able to answer in the affirmative; but the too striking appearances of truth, and the too authentic and universally known records of history, rise up in absolute opposition to our desires.

In the bosom of the church, the errors of *Donatus* and *Arius* poisoned the first seeds of the faith; bishops were in arms against bishops: the people espoused these quarrels, with a degree of fury; the temples, and the basilics were disputed, sword in hand, and sprinkled with the blood of the citizens; odious accusations and atrocious calumnies were reciprocally scattered abroad by the chiefs of each party, whilst these fanatics tore one another in pieces, with a ferocity, which, to borrow the expression of a contemporary author, surpassed even the ferocity of wild beasts.<sup>(n)</sup> The first emperor,<sup>(o)</sup> educated in the principles of Christianity, introduces  
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(n) Nullas infestas hominibus bestias ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum. Ammian. Marcellin. l. 22.

(o) *Constantius*.

his reign with the murder of his uncle, and of his first cousin. He madly throws himself into the party of the *Arians*, whilst, at one moment, a bloody persecutor, and at another moment, an ignorant conciliator, he either deals out his orders for executions, or assembles councils. The bishops, perpetually hurried, from place to place, abandon, for idle controversies, the care of their flocks; whilst the provinces, drained by the expences of these journies, become at length scarcely able to defray them.

The same iniquity, the same injustice prevailed throughout the civil administration. A jealousy, equally extravagant and cruel, became the leading principle of the government. Informers infested the provinces, nor did their superiors blush at having established them as a body, and given them a particular rank.<sup>(p)</sup> The administration degenerated into a barbarous inquisition; punishments were inflicted with additional cruelty; criminals were burnt for slight offences; the  
faith

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(p) Such were the *Curiosi*, a set of officers, who, in the quality of inspectors, or spies, were sent into all the provinces; their number is said to have amounted to fifteen thousand.

faith of treaties was no longer kept sacred; kings were assassinated in the very midst of peace, and even during the convivial joy, with which they celebrated their festivals; (q) public morals became more and more corrupted; eunuchs, the vile instruments of the most abominable pleasures, were appointed generals and prime ministers; the expences of the table, and the luxury of the court,

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(q) *Valens*, by the basest act of treachery, accomplished the murder of an Armenian king, who had always been attached to the Romans. *Valentinian* ordered that *Gabinus*, king of the *Quadi*, should be assassinated, at a feast. *Valentinian* the second, jealous of the great increase of the *Goths*, whom the emperor *Valens* had quartered, within the provinces of the empire, issued a proclamation, to inform them that, if, on a certain day, they should assemble in the capital of their respective provinces, each individual would receive a new distribution of lands. Seduced by hopes, these unfortunate wretches did assemble, and were all put to the sword.

The barbarity of *Valens*, having been mentioned in the beginning of the note, it may not, here, be improper to introduce an example, at once ridiculous and dreadful, of those violent excesses, to which the timid and ignorant superstition of this emperor was capable of driving him. An impudent impostor, pretending to have discovered, by his skill in magic, that some particular person, the two first syllables of whose name,

were

court, were, at once, boundless and absurd ;(r) the laws, by being multiplied without end, were equal proofs of the depravity of the government, and the wickedness of the people : in short, every thing was altered ; every thing was corrupted ; even the discipline of the armies, and the intrepidity of the soldiers, were disordered and extinguished : thus, the destruction of whole generations, became the only remedy against the evils, which afflicted the earth ; in like manner, as the setting fire to the thorns and briars, which over-run neglected fields, proves the sole mean of obtaining a new and advantageous harvest.

Whilst

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were *Theod*, was destined to be the next successor to the throne, Valens ordered all to be massacred, whose appellations were introduced by these letters. The reader may judge how general such a carnage must have been, when he hath recollected, that it was exceedingly common, during that and the two preceding centuries, for men to assume a name, some part of which alluded to the Greek word, signifying God. K.

(r) It is well known that Julian, soon after he became emperor, concluded the barber, on his entrance into the room, to be one of the great lords of his court ; and being informed of the wages, which this servant received, he discovered that they were sufficient to maintain more than an hundred persons.

Whilst we are painting this melancholy picture, the affecting strokes of which are not heightened beyond reality, we anxiously wish to remove, from the reader, every occasion of suspecting, that we have the smallest intention of attributing to christianity those disorders against which we have exclaimed. Far from harbouring such an idea, our only aim is to prove, that the misfortunes of the times did not permit religion to procure, for mankind, an happier situation in this life. Perhaps, even this very religion became a new source of evils; for, as the purest aliments are apt to grow corrupted, in bodies attacked by diseases, so the most sacred tenets of the faith are frequently converted into the instruments of the most shocking disasters. Of all the enemies of human nature, the most modern and the most cruel enemy is intolerant persecution, which, following religion in her progress, step by step, extended itself, as she extended, and unsheathed the sword wheresoever the voice of zeal had propagated the word.

If we fix this epoch at the origin of that empire, which the Christian religion hath maintained ever since, it is not because, in  
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the course of our reflections we had not before observed some seeds of these dreadful principles. A single nation, amongst the multitude of nations, which have appeared upon the surface of the globe, might be sufficient to furnish us with instances of the most bloody acts ; if the Jewish people, who considered their government in the light of a perpetual inspiration, could serve as an example, in the present case, where an intolerant spirit was exerted, solely, against abstracted and fugitive dogmas.

It is more easy to comprehend, how naturally a people conclude themselves obliged, to exterminate all those, who worship such deities, as may have been set up, in opposition to their own God, than to explain how the fire and the sword can be employed to compel persons to express the idea of *consubstantiality*, by a letter more, or a letter less.<sup>(s)</sup> It is not, therefore, without reason, that

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(s) Ὁμοῦσιος, or Ὁμοσιος.— so, probably from an error in the press, are these words printed; whilst I write this note, the authorities to which I could wish to refer, are not at hand; but if I can trust my memory, the two terms are Ὁμοῦσιος, which described the consubstantiality of Christ with God, according to the

that the origin of this intolerant spirit, in matters of opinion, hath been fixed at the same epoch, with the propagation of christianity, throughout the empire.

It may, perhaps, be objected, that the Pagan emperors were the first emperors who afforded an example of persecution; but when a madman, a furious wretch, like Nero, directed his tyranny against the Christians, he could, at least, have pleaded in his vindication, that he considered them in the light of innovators and as rebels, who refused to submit to the ancient and established laws; for, until that period, the mode of public worship had composed a part of the legislation; and the Jews, or the Christians, (Jews and Christians, being at that time, equally the same to the heathens) were the first who determined not to conform to the public rites. Any person, refusing to swear by the Genius of the emperor, was deemed guilty of high treason, and this is an article,  
which

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the full meaning of the Unitarians, and *ὁμοιωσις*, a phrase by which the Semi-Arians expressed their opinion that the Son was indeed similar to the Father in his essence, yet not by nature, but by a peculiar privilege. K.



which should be thoroughly enquired into, if we desire to become acquainted with every circumstance, relative to the first persecutions. But, to inflict the most horrid punishments, in order to fix the decision of questions, which were rather grammatical, than theological; to destroy with fire and the sword, those who invoked the same Supreme Being, who observed the same ceremonies, and revered the same authority, bespeaks a madness, till then unparalleled, and which sprang, in the Roman empire, from the tyranny of the emperors, and the ambition of the bishops.

Let us be just, and remove from the ministers of the gospel a part of those reproaches, with which they have been assailed. I assert it, with satisfaction, and I know not why the apologists for christianity have not asserted it before me; this barbarous and intolerant spirit, these scandalous and atrocious disputes are indebted, for no inconsiderable part of their origin, to the peculiar characteristic of the *Greeks*, to that unhappy passion, which this nation had introduced, for empty dialectics, and frivolous sophisms. Whatsoever may be the cause, it

it was not, until the Christian emperors began to reign, until even the most revered princes, such as *Constantine*, and *Theodosius* had ascended the throne, that the sentence of the laws was, for the first time, expressed in these terms: "if any person, whatsoever, should dare to offer sacrifices in the temple, let him be exterminated by the avenging sword. . . . . We command all men, upon pain of death, to believe, that one God-head existeth, in three Persons, &c. &c." (1)

Thus, from the first appearance of heresies, that is from the æra, at which theology began to supply the place of morality, mankind,

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(1) Placuit omnibus locis, atque urbibus universi claudi templa. . . . . Quod si quis aliquid fortè hujusmodi perpetraverit, gladio ultore sternatur. Cod. Teod. c. 10.

If, in the midst of so much atrocious barbarity, any thing ridiculous could extort a smile, no words have a better claim to it than the following, extracted from a law made by *Constantius*: cesset superstitio, . . . . . &c. Nam qui contra legem divi parentis nostri, et hanc nostræ mansuetudinis jussionem ausus fuerit sacrificium celebrare, competens in eum vindicta, et præsens sententia exerceatur. . . . . &c. It is as if he had said: if any should presume to transgress the orders, issuing from our most mild and most benevolent person, it is our will that he be immediately strangled.

already condemned to submit to the yoke of unjust masters; laden with taxes; disturbed in the enjoyment of their property; and harassed by war, and all its attendant calamities, perceived themselves, on a sudden, exposed to a new species of tyranny, which, penetrating within the most secret recesses of the human heart, scatters through the faculties of the soul, the same disorders and afflictions, which civil despotism spreads through all our exterior relations. Thus, from the meetings of the *Nicene* council, down to the repeal of the edict of *Nantes*, every dungeon was filled with victims; scaffolds were continually erected; and the blood flowed in streams, to consolidate, by the feeble efforts of humanity, the work undertaken by the Son of God Himself.

Another inconvenience resulting from this fanatic and exclusive spirit, is the destruction of all critical investigation. This is absolutely to extinguish the torch of history. Truth and certainty are the most likely to be our guides, when we direct our researches up to those ancient, but obscure records of the past ages. In the place of *Xenophon*, of *Livy*, of *Polybius*, and of *Tacitus*, respectable citizens, whose bosoms glowed with the virtues of  
every

every æra, and every country, we only find a set of party-writers, who relate facts, with no view, but to support particular opinions. The annals, even the calendars, are sacrificed to polemical disputes, and the memorials of these miserable times are no more than so many insipid *cases*.

Amongst a multitude of historians, who have been either the extravagant panegyrist, or the bitter satyrists of their princes, according to their having merited commendation, or invective, from their particular sects, but two Pagan authors have prevailed over the efforts, which were used to destroy their works. *Zosimus*, an historian not much endued with elegance or judgement, is sometimes led away by that spirit of party, which equally animated the idolaters, against their antagonists; but his history hath frequently served, as a guide, to the discovery of a great number of facts, and the abridged and precise manner, so conspicuous in his writings, leaves no room to imagine, that his principal view was to throw an odium upon the Christians. It were to be wished, that our modern compilers, who abide by his authority, in the other parts of his work, were not so ready to reject that

authority, whensoever he condemns the conduct of those personages, whom they have taken under their protection. *Theodosius*, indeed, the hero of the catholic authors, hath met with no favour at his hands. He described him as a prince, sunk in luxury and effeminacy; whilst the ecclesiastical writers speak of him, as uniting the character of a great man, with the character of an illustrious saint. But, although these last historians have taken care to acquaint us, that he frequently humbled himself before the clergy, and publicly asserted, that *Ambrosius* had fully convinced him, *how superior a bishop was to an emperor*, yet they have not produced any negative proofs against the imputations of *Zosimus*. That *Theodosius* waged war, with intrepidity and success, cannot be denied: but, hath the flattery of historians been able to conceal that excessive indolence, which made him so long defer the moment of entering into action? and doth not this observation agree with that passion for pleasure and voluptuousness, of which he is accused by *Zosimus*? May not, also, his behaviour to *Maximus*, be taxed with dissimulation, or timidity? considering this impostor, as a rebel,

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and a regicide, should he have admitted his title of emperor, or have suffered the statues of so flagitious a wretch, to be erected near his own statues? if, on the contrary, *Theodosius* felt himself obliged by policy, to treat as an emperor, the man whom armies and success had crowned, ought he to have made secret and insidious preparations for attacking him? (*u*) or, was it just, after he became the arbiter of his fate, to order that he should be executed, as a rebel? again, when *Eugenius*, a new usurper, a new accomplice of another regicide, (*x*) sent ambassadors to wait upon him, should he have received them so graciously? should he have lavished such

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(*u*) *Theodosius*, to deceive *Maximus*, appeared buffed in the equipment of a large naval force; *Maximus* fell into the snare, and, the more effectually to resist the pretended attacks of *Theodosius*, embarked the greater part of his troops. It was then, that *Theodosius* threw aside the mask; and marching towards *Maximus*, with a powerful army, attacked and defeated him. It hath been asserted, but how justly is difficult to determine, that *Theodosius*, touched with his misfortune, would have spared his life; and that the soldiers, who judged him unworthy of so much clemency, struck off his head. K.

(*x*) *Arbogastes*, who caused *Valentinian* to be strangled, and then saluted *Eugenius*, an obscure wretch, and once a schoolmaster, with the title of emperor. K.

presents on them, at their departure, and shortly afterwards, have marched against their master, in compliance with the advice of *John the Solitary*, and the commands of *Saint Philip*, and *Saint John the Evangelist*, who, although they had never borne arms, at any period of their lives, did, notwithstanding, make themselves known to him, by appearing, like the *Dioscuri*, under the form of two beautiful knights, caparisoned from head to foot. I shall pass by the massacre of *Thessalonica*, a massacre concerted with so much barbarity, and executed by so detestable a treachery:—we must not dwell on this atrocious circumstance. All historians unite in describing it, as a fortunate event, since it proved the occasion of presenting to the Christian world a more consoling spectacle; an emperor humbling himself in the presence of a bishop: (y) but I cannot avoid observing, that

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(y) *Ambrosius* refusing to receive *Theodosius*, within the pale of the church, until he had undergone a public penance, and the contrite emperor implicitly submitting to the injunctions of the bishop, must, undoubtedly, have proved a great occasion of triumph, amongst the Christians; but comforting as the humiliating atonements

that from the conflagration of *Rome*, as ordered by *Nero*, if *Nero* really was the author of that calamity, and the slaughter at *Alexandria*; under *Caracalla*, history hath not furnished us with any instance of a cruelty, at once so odious, and so criminal.

We have already spoken concerning the judgement, which *Zosimus* hath passed on *Constantine*. These two examples may account for the endeavours, which the ecclesiastical authors have used, to weaken the credit of his writings.(z) True criticism, more

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ments of such a tyrant might be thought, they were too dearly purchased, with the destruction of seven thousand human creatures; for so many, at least, were slaughtered at *Theſſalonica*. K.

(z) That the reader may be the better enabled to judge, whether the criticism of *Zosimus* be absolutely contemptible, it may be proper to transcribe what he hath written, concerning the Monks. Speaking of the troubles excited at Constantinople, on account of Saint John Chryſoſtom, he ſaith: “the city was expoſed to tumults, and the Chriſtian church was already in the power of thoſe, whom they call Monks. Theſe are men, who have renounced marriage; and who, inhabiting the country, and the cities, have given riſe to a claſs of individuals, equally uſeleſs, and unfit, either for war, or for any civil employment; whoſe only occupation, is the graſping at, and amaffing of immense wealth,



circumspect, opposes suffrages to suffrages, scrutinizes all the interests, and passions of historians, and wheresoever it doth not meet with impartiality, suspends its judgement.

*Ammianus Marcellinus* hath been treated with more caution and respect. This, indeed, was the best expedient, to gloss over a dissent from an author, whose character, whose rank in the army, and whose connections with the first members of the state, are all known; a citizen, who relates his facts with perspicuity, and that natural and ingenuous attachment, so constantly visible, in the writings of those, who have taken some part in the administration of affairs; in short, a military man, whom we should, without hesitation, compare to *Mr. de Feuquieres*,<sup>(a)</sup> if

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wealth, under a pretence of assisting the poor, whilst they themselves are the means of propagating misery and beggary." Who doth not perceive from this passage, how much Zosimus was blinded by prejudice, and what reason there is to suspect his judgement?

(a) The *Marquis de Feuquieres* was a lieutenant-general in the French army, during the reign of Lewis the fourteenth. His memoirs were written for the instruction of his son. Of these an English translation was published in 1737, forming two octavo volumes. They contain an account of the several operations of the

if the erudition and the literature, which have enriched his work, did not give him a great advantage over the French author. And yet this *Marcellinus*, from whom all the historians have borrowed materials, even for the least detail, is, at once, neglected, whenever he hazards any favourable expression, in vindication of the Pagans, or of the emperor *Julian*.

The name of *Julian* is alone sufficient to revive endless disputes. This emperor, applauded

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the war, of the sieges which were undertaken, and the battles fought from 1672, to 1710. The military merit of this officer may be called hereditary, and seems to have descended to him from his grandfather, and father, Manasses, and Isaac de Pas, who were both deservedly celebrated for their conduct and intrepidity. The martial genius of Anthony, the subject of this note, hath been honorably acknowledged, even by those compatriots whom he reviled. But whilst they did justice to his abilities, they were so irritated by the severity with which he had attacked them, that it was humorously observed, that the Marquis must be the bravest man in Europe, who slept in the very midst of a hundred thousand enemies. His work contains a list of the mistakes committed by the French generals. A propensity to censure hath sometimes seduced him into a misrepresentation of facts. Perhaps the loss of a Marshal's staff occasioned such reprehensible passages in a performance where so much is to be admired. K.

plauded to the skies, by the enemies of the Christian faith, hath appeared so meritorious in the opinion of a celebrated modern, that he took the pains to write his history, wherein he labours to rectify and ascertain the ideas, which the reader ought to form of him. (b) It will, doubtless, be expected by those, who were offended at the liberty, with which we have spoken of *Constantine*, that Julian, so striking a contrast to this prince, should be complimented with our panegyrics; for the spirit of calumny is continually apt to suspect every motive; and its natural malignity easily

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(b) Unless I mistake, the modern alluded to, is Mr. de V. who, in the third chapter of his "Melanges Philosophiques," speaks of Julian, as inferior only to a single individual, if not the greatest man, that ever existed. His assertion hath been attacked, and refuted by *Gauchat*, *Soret*, and others. Were it impossible for one of the most penetrating writers that hath enlightened any age, to be in the wrong; a similar passage in the "spirit of laws" might give an irresistible weight to the declaration of Mr. de V. but Montesquieu is not without his errors, nor will all his readers conclude him to be infallible, when they peruse this sentence. "Il n'y a point eû après Julien de prince plus digne de gouverner des hommes." . . . l'Esprit des loix, l. 24. c. 10. . . . V. la vie de Julien par l'Abbé Bletterie. K.

fly suggests the artifice, which it supposes peculiar to the objects of its hatred. For once, at least, its conclusions will prove erroneous. Far from taking any share in this dispute, we cannot avoid agreeing that both parties have been influenced by a childish obstinacy, less humiliating, however, to false zeal, than to philosophy; since philosophy should never assist reason with the arms of fanaticism. Such eagerness to *preconize*(c) an emperor, who stiled himself a philosopher, seemed, if I may be allowed the expression, the youthful folly of philosophy. In fact, this aversion from prejudices, this springing forward towards the liberty of thinking, which comes, after so many ages, prepared to enter its appeal against such a multitude of received opinions, cannot, amongst us, be said to boast a very ancient origin; and with these first efforts of reason, passion hath been frequently intermixed. It was, certainly, a crime to persecute the Pagans, and  
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(c) *Preconizare*, a term peculiar to the Roman Catholics, and alluding to the report usually made in the Popes confistory, that the party presented to a benefice, is qualified for it. The expression, in this place, signifies "to bestow excessive praise." K.

to endeavour to sway their opinions, by the severity of punishments ; but was it not an equal crime to oppress christianity ? were toleration, and liberty of conscience, the principles which actuated Julian, when he drenched the empire with the blood of victims ; and when, a fanatic defender of false deities, instead of following, whilst he was seated on the throne, the dictates of an impartial philosophy, he presented to the world, in his own person, nothing more than the pattern of a zealous heathen. I cannot admire either the virtues, which are too strongly tinged with imitation, or heroes formed only after models. It is difficult to determine, what character of the comedian is the most prevalent in the mind of Julian. At one moment, it is Marcus Aurelius, at another moment, Trajan, and then Alexander, whom he is so eager to copy. This effort is equally conspicuous in his virtues, and his abilities. All his actions are concerted, all his designs are borrowed from ancient examples, and all his compositions are grounded on the compositions of his own times. The *Mysopogon* is not the work of an emperor, but the work of a sophist : his p  
negyrics

negyrics are not such as a *Cæsar* should have pronounced, but such as a Rhetorician would have written. During the war of the Gauls, he seems to have striven to copy Julius Cæsar; during the Persian war, he appears to have imitated the confidence and intrepidity of Trajan; but then, what consistency shall we discover in this medley of philosophy and devotion? in morals, he was a stoic, in the temple, an idolater, and in his closet, an unworthy platonist, who sought to corrupt the doctrine of this sect, by debasing it with the allay of magic.

But if we thus fearlessly treat with so much rigour one of the greatest princes, who adorned the lower empire, how justly, at the same time, ought we to exclaim against that bitterness, with which he hath been calumniated by the ecclesiastical historians? what dependance can we place on their judgment, when after having canonized Constantine, the murderer of his wife and son, they rail at Julian, with the most indecent fury, exerting every possible effort to fix upon his character an imputation of crimes, too atrocious to gain credit, even although they had been attributed to Caligula, and to Nero?

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in this instance, we perceive, how zeal overleaps all bounds, and to what blind and inconsiderate excesses the emotions of hatred may be driven. These, notwithstanding, are the very authors who serve us as guides in ecclesiastical matters, and whose opinion we still frequently follow in profane history. Having premised this, it is not without apprehensions, that we introduce the names of *Socrates, Sozomenes, and Theodoret*; to these writers are we indebted for a multitude of exceedingly instructive facts, the authority of which might admit of a retrenchment of some part of that confidence, wherewith they were received. And here, I must beg leave to remark, that these facts have, by a singular good fortune, maintained an higher degree of credit, the more the authors who transmitted them, have been neglected. The reason of this is very plain. It is impossible to meet, in the original, with any fact, or probable event, which is not either preceded or followed by such absurd tales, as soon destroy all that reliance which we might be supposed to place on the testimony of the author; whereas in compilations, or in the modern abridgements, great care hath been taken to  
reject

reject whatsoever was fabulous, and to preserve only those details, in which the least risk seems to have been run, at the expence of veracity. For example, the historians who have written, since the time of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, perceiving that he took notice of an earthquake, which retarded the works, carried on to accomplish the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem; have chosen from the three authors, whom we have just mentioned, every credible circumstance, in the wonderful relation, which they have transmitted to us; and having availed themselves of these, they thought proper to add, that they were facts confirmed by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Pagan writer. I must confess that there was a time, when, relying on the credit of modern authors, I believed that *Ammianus Marcellinus* had asserted, that the emperor Julian, having ordered the temple to be rebuilt, the work was afterwards interrupted by the interposition of a miracle; and this appeared to me the less extraordinary, as I know that the ancients are not sparing of prodigies. The original reading, so constantly necessary to enable us to form a judgement, relative to the events of the past ages, hath absolutely



undeceived me. This famous passage, so often quoted, and yet so seldom delivered with fidelity, runs thus: “ although the emperor was much busied in accelerating the preparations for his expedition, (*against the Persians*) he notwithstanding knew how to divide his sollicitude, and attention: neglecting no circumstance which might tend to immortalize his reign; he prepared to rebuild a formerly much celebrated temple, which had been destroyed during the continuance of the siege of *Jerusalem*, begun by Vespasian, and terminated by Titus. The direction of this undertaking, to accomplish which immense sums were necessary, had been entrusted to *Alypius*, who formerly commanded in Britain. As this officer, assisted by the Prefect of the province, was superintending and vigorously encouraging the operations, dreadful flames frequently issuing from the foundations, consumed the workmen, and at length rendered these places inaccessible. The irruptions continuing, all attempts to proceed were entirely given up.”(d)

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(d) Et licet accidentium varietatem sollicita mente præcipiens, multiplicatos expeditionis apparatus flagrantis

Here, several reflections naturally present themselves: first, no circumstance was less extraordinary, at that period, than the circumstance of earthquakes attended by volcanos. At the same æra, and in the space of a century, *Constantinople, Edessa, Antioch*, and the majority of the cities of *Asia Minor*,

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grantis studio perurgeret, diligentiam tamen ubique dividens, imperiique sui memoriam magnitudine operum gettiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolymam templum, quod post multa et interne civitatis certamina obfistente Vespasiano, posteaque Tito ægre est oppugnatum instaurare, sumptibus cogitabat immodicis; negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiocheni, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro præfectis. Cum itaque rei idem fortiter instaret Alypius, juvenisque provinciæ rector, metuendi globi flammæ prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus in excessum hoc quo modo elemento destinatus repellente cessavit incertum. Ad verbum e lib. 23 Am. Marcel. fol. Bononiæ, 1517.

The truth of this miracle hath been denied, and asserted with equal obstinacy. The celebrated Basnage endeavours to weaken its credibility in his "histoire des Juifs, vol. 4. Against this unbelieving author, and his adherents, the over-bearing giant of literature, William, lord bishop of Gloucester, hath appeared within the lists, and brandishing his unconquerable Julian in his hand, hath at least silenced antagonists whom he could not convince. K.

were destroyed by earthquakes. History makes mention of several earthquakes, which happened, even at Jerusalem. It is also well known, that this country abounds with bitumen, and that the conflagration of so large a city, and so rich a temple, must have produced much sulphureous, and inflammable matter, which might take fire, at the slightest communication with the air. Secondly, if this event was accompanied by miraculous circumstances, why did *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a lover of the marvellous, as all the ancients were, take such care to conceal them? it will be answered that, nothing is more clearly to be accounted for: *Ammianus* was a Pagan, and such an event must have proved a subject of endless triumph, to the Christian religion. To this it may be replied, that it is very evident that no such effect was produced; and that supposing that our author, had not been free from all partiality, one of these two circumstances must have been the case; he would either have entirely omitted the fact, or have endeavoured to give it a different interpretation; all which might have been very easy, since he could have opposed a hundred reasons to one reason. “*The Gods were irritated*”

irritated at perceiving preparations, wherewith to erect a temple to the God of the Jews, a nation, over whom they had triumphed, with such signal success, under Titus. But Heaven would not suffer the treasures, and the labour of the people, so be sacrificed, during such calamitous times, to works, at once useless, and ostentatious." Do we not know that writers never seem to want reasons, wherewith to explain the causes of events? Ammianus did not, therefore, consider this event, as a prodigy, neither had any of his contemporaries embraced a different opinion, since he hath taken no pains to oppose it, nor even deigned to drop the smallest reflection on the subject. Now, I think that the indifference of one party, is, in general, the strongest evidence which can be produced, against the allegations of the other party; for, in short, with how little credit soever, the *convulsionnaires* might be received at present; no author will ever write the history of our times, without making some remarks on what happened at the church of *Saint Medard*, and even the fanatic performance of M\*\*\*\* hath been honoured with some refutations. But *Sozomenes* and *Theodoret* are reputable authors; and they enter into a full

detail of this fact. Be it so; but if the testimony of Sozomenes prove of such great weight, we must, then, believe in forcerers, we must imagine that magicians were able to make the demons appear before them, and to command the oracles.<sup>(e)</sup> We must also suppose that Julian, the least sanguinary of all the princes, ordered the bodies of the women to be ripped up, that he might consult their entrails; we must be convinced that the Sibyls have evidently mentioned the mystery of the redemption, and alluded to it in this line.

“O felix lignum in quo Deus ipse pependit.”

Neither

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<sup>(e)</sup> It is to Sozomenes that we are obliged for the childish story of Julian, who is said to have been introduced into a cave, in order to consult the demons, and to have made, on his becoming frightened, the sign of the cross, which occasioned them to disappear. This author quotes a number of oracles, in favour of the Christians; and yet it hath been well known, at least, ever since the appearance of that famous dissertation, composed by Mr. Vandale, and the excellent abridgement of it by Mr. de Fontenelle, that the oracles never were inspired by the demons; and that this whole affair was nothing more than an imposition, carried on by the detestable knavery of the priests.

(f) Neither is it to be doubted, that in Judæa, a luminous cross appeared, which covered half the sky; and that another cross appeared, during the rebuilding of the temple of *Jerusalem*; and that the habits of the labourers were covered with little stars, which absolutely remained fixed thereon, and seemed as if they had been worked into the stuff. (g) If the reader should prefer *Theodoret*, he will find that *Julian*, when he quitted *Gaul*, in order to give battle to *Constantius*, passed by a vine, the grapes of which had been already gathered, and yet found it loaden with fresh green bunches, having an infinite number of little crosses, imprinted by the drops of dew, upon their berries. It will be no great trouble to open *Socrates*, who hath advanced the same fact; and from whose writings these authors

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(f) See his ecclesiastical history. b. 11. c. 5.

(g) The Christians of this period, were possessed, even to a degree of frenzy, with a notion that they saw crosses, in every place. When *Theodosius* ordered the temple of *Serapis* to be pulled down, it was reported that in demolishing the walls, crosses were discovered, engraven on the greater part of the stones: but, on a closer examination, it appeared that these engravings represented the Phallus. It is well known that the Phallus was a representation of the mark of virility.

have probably copied. The only difference between *Socrates* and *Sozomenes*, is, that the one asserts that the miracle wrought at Jerusalem, converted all the Jews ; whilst the other affirms, that not one of those Jews was either stricken with these prodigies, or disposed to embrace the religion of the Christians.

We shall conclude this article with a reflection, which seems to have escaped the notice of the preceding critics ; namely, that whether it arose from the frauds practised by the people, who were enemies to drudgery, and labour, or whether it proceeded from that superstition, peculiar to unpolished minds, in whose ideas, the great and the marvellous are so easily confounded, it frequently happened that important enterprises were interrupted by prodigies. I shall only produce one instance taken from *Dion*. This author relates, that whilst *Nero* was attempting to divide the *Isthmus of Corinth*, several phantoms appeared, and intimidated the workmen. These phantoms were, in fact, no other than the phantoms of fatigue, and impatience, but the writers of those times, were cautious of making such a confession, for then, a prodigy was of more consequence,  
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and in higher estimation, than any natural, or probable circumstance whatsoever. (b) As to the rest, it would furnish such little occasion of triumph to the Christian religion, whether this miracle happened, or not, that we cannot reasonably be taxed with any ill intentions, in the course of this investigation. We are not, in the present instance, more criminal than many respectable writers, who have called in question, the relation of the miracles of the *Theban Legion*, and the *Labarum*, whatever honour they might have reflected on Christianity. Judicious and discerning criticisms will always redound to the advantage of truth; they will increase its lustre, either by throwing it into its genuine and most brilliant light, or by separating it from all impure allay.

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(b) How many stories of apparitions, have risen out of the inventions of lazy, or self-interested domestics? even amongst the troops, such relations have been known to gain credit, and absolutely elude the vigilance, and discernment of the chief officers. It hath frequently happened that the soldiers fatigued and harassed with having mounted guard, at some inconvenient post, have, at length, seduced others into a persuasion that it was haunted by a spirit, and so, concluded the farce, by deserting their stations.



We shall not enter into the particulars of those times, which fill up the interval, from the death of *Constantine*, to the destruction of the Western empire. The ravages of despotism, superstition, and war, preyed equally on the conquerors, and the conquered. The ancient states were driven to the last stage of calamity. New nations, or rather *Barbarians*, as yet ferocious, as yet wandering through the darkness of ignorance; without a country, and without property; now warriors, and now travellers; at one moment crowned with victory, and at another moment sunk in slavery; always agitated, and as constantly, either laden with adversity, or intoxicated with slaughter, were, then, more astonished at, than charmed with their success. No enjoyment followed their acquisitions, whilst their only happy hours were the hours of victory. All the *Barbarian* princes, except *Genseric*, fell by the hands of one another, and perished miserably.

The motives for war, were, at that period, the most reasonable, which could have been suggested in its justification: and these motives were, on the one hand, the defence of their country; and on the other hand, the  
necessity

necessity of procuring a subsistence, and the desire of enjoying an happier life, within a milder climate. But this war became more sanguinary than ever; religion far from diminishing the horrors of it, had only given a keener edge to the inveterate exertions of hatred; such was the spirit of party; so intimately was it blended with ambition, and all the scourges of humanity.

It is not a little singular that this æra of guilt and madness should have given birth to excellent civil laws. (*i*) We may perceive, that some of the wisest of those laws were instituted by princes, who reigned in the very midst of these troubles, and whose reigns were also but of short duration. (*k*)

When

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(*i*) Valentinian the first introduced a toleration act within his dominions; we read in "l'histoire du bas empire," that this prince, after having long meditated on the part which might be the properest for him to take, at length, gave the preference to the worst part. This book hath been written, since the beginning of this century.

(*k*) Valentinian, who succeeded the emperor Julian, in February, 364, and died, in consequence of the bursting of a vein, during a fit of passion, in November 375, did not reign quite twelve years. This prince, perceiving the fordid habits of the ambassadors of the

Quadi,

When the perpetration of abuses was confined to no limits, such regulations became necessary. Thus, amidst epidemical disorders, the science of physic acquires a greater degree of perfection; and thus, amongst armies, the knowledge of surgery is rendered more unerring, and extensive. The power of the clergy was, at different times, made subject to particular restrictions: the boldness, and the insolence of the monks were somewhat curbed by the *Chalcedonian council*,<sup>(1)</sup> and the unmarried women were forbidden to take the vows, until they had attained

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Quadi, a people too poor to purchase apparel, and too unpolished to understand the propriety of dress, ridiculously imagined that their garbs had been assumed, with an intention to insult him, and thus sacrificed his life to the violence of rage. Valens, his brother and associate in the empire, had only reached the fifteenth year of his reign, when taking refuge after his defeat within a neighbouring house, he was surrounded by the Goths, who, with the building, reduced the body of their enemy to ashes. K.

(1) They were made subject to the jurisdiction of the ordinary, and forbidden to intermeddle in civil affairs, and particularly in matters relating to the finances. "Hist. du bas emp. l. 33.

tained to the age of forty.(*m*) Each city was allowed its tribunes, or protectors, who, under the title of *defensores*, undertook to plead the causes of the poor and oppressed citizens.(*n*) The emperors, alarmed at the readiness, with which they granted favours, and privileges, directed that their conduct should be submitted to the examination of the magistrates, and commanded these last to pay no regard to their orders, whensoever they did not appear strictly conformable to the established laws. But such precautions which still subsist amongst the French, and are useful under an absolute form of government,(*o*) discover an imperfection in the main spring

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(*m*) This law was instituted by Majorian, who made a ridiculous decree, obliging all widows who had no children, either to marry again, or to give up the half of their effects, to their next heirs. *ibid.* l. 34.

(*n*) Under Valentinian, and Valens.

(*o*) An ordinance passed, during the reign of Lewis the twelfth, forbidding the magistrates to pay the least regard to the "lettres de jussion," (*letters containing orders from the chancellor, &c.*) whensoever they should be found contrary to the laws of the monarchy, and the public welfare.

With this edict, no unpleasing earnest of the subsequent felicity of his people, Lewis opened a reign, which,

spring of the political machine, a defect in the constitution. Republics are strangers to any thing like this: and it were perhaps better that authority should restrain its powers of administration, within certain bounds, than that the disobedience of the magistrates should be connived at. The emperors also concerted measures, to render travelling more easy. The roads were repaired; places of accommodation were erected, at convenient distances, and relays were always kept in readiness, at the expence of the provinces.

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which, could we throw a veil over his mercenary disposal of preferments, his unworthy protection of Alexander the sixth, the worst Pope, and the worst man, and his desertion of his allies, the Swifs; approached nearer than most other reigns to the government of an excellent father, over his fortunate children. In spite of some disagreeable shades, his picture, as drawn by the rough pencil of *Saint Gelais*, is certainly a just resemblance. “ *Il ne courut oncques au regne de nul des autres si bon tems qu’il a fait durant le sien.*” It is scarcely possible for an Englishman, who perceives even in a rival state such multitudes deserving of a better lot, to close this note, before he hath remarked, with equal indignation and concern, that had the ordinance of Lewis subsisted in its full force, during the present period, every *lettre de jussion* would have proved as insignificant, as are the murmurs of the meanest peasant, who languishes under its oppressions. K.

At this period, mankind had no idea of the very interesting science of finances and commerce. The necessity of erecting an impassable wall, around the frontiers, to prevent the circulation of the national species, through foreign countries, was, then, universally assented to: and this opinion hath prevailed, even till within these fifty years. *Constantius* proclaimed a law, declaring that commerce should be carried on, solely, by barter. It provided that all foreign negociators, on their arrival, within the empire, should be obliged to declare what sums of money, they brought with them, in order that means might be taken to prevent them, from adding to those sums, previous to their return. The same law prohibited an exchange of the money of the empire, for the money of any other nation. It was not, at that time, known that merchandize can command species, and that without liberty, neither commerce, nor riches can exist.

As to the *Barbarians*, no sooner did they acquire a degree of stability, before they turned their thoughts towards a necessary legislation. They seem to have succeeded even better than the emperors, whose too complicated

cated laws were somewhat infected with the subtlety of the Greeks. The *Theodorician* code was during a long time in force, in Spain, and it may, in part, be discovered in the capitulars of *Charlemagne*. But this is a subject, on which we must expatiate more largely, in the course of the following chapters, where society will assume a different aspect, and where we shall find a new order of things, a new political, and moral system. In fact, the very expression, *feodal law*, of itself sufficiently announces the greatest revolution, which hath ever been effected upon earth, and at once reveals to us the sources of all modern governments. It is time, therefore, that we take our leave of this celebrated people, to whose sway the universe submitted and whose state we have presumed to make the subject of our observations. After having seen them laboriously extend themselves through the little territory of the *Romagna*, free themselves from the yoke of kings, reduce nations under their own yoke, become intoxicated with glory and success, fall into that imbecility which succeeds a delirium, then, wear fresh chains, grow shortly more mean, and abject, than they were once  
haughty,

haughty, and ostentatious ; and, to fill up the measure of infamy, yield to *Barbarians*, the empire of arms, and to effeminate Greeks, the empire of opinion, we, at length, find them, submitting to the power of a *Goth*, and an *Herulian*.(p)

Before we turn our eyes aside from this prodigious ruin, we must lament, not that such a series of good fortune should have been eclipsed, to leave behind it, only the most melancholy traces ; but that a period of near twelve centuries affords no æra, at which so powerful a nation hath attempted to close the wounds of humanity, by cherishing the existence of public welfare and prosperity. We are not apprehensive of asserting, that all the long and brilliant career of the *Roman* empire, cannot, to a philosopher, be worth the times, which have elapsed in England, from the revolution, to the present period ; but of this, we must treat more fully in the course of our work. We shall, however, observe, that as in the celestial revolutions, the planets are confined to their particular motions, so, in political revolutions,

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(p) Odoacer, and Theodoric.



the capitals, the great cities are subject, also, to their destiny, their peculiar fortune, which either accelerates, or retards their destruction, which either overthrows, or supports them. But farther; this particular chain of circumstances is, according to all appearance, more frequently advantageous, than detrimental to them. Experience proves that, during those unhappy times, when military despotism rose upon the wreck of government, the great cities always maintained a kind of liberty. The reason is, because, however specious the mask which policy may have assumed, force alone preserves the privilege of governing; because a great number of men, strictly united, become respectable; and because the multitude, or common people are always to be dreaded; especially, when deprived of representatives, and protectors, they express their meaning only by tumultuous shouts, and act but by some sudden, and wild assault. Even Rome was not reduced to this last stage of power. She always enjoyed the same order of magistrates; and the credit of names, is to a degenerated people, what the credit of the magistracy itself, is to a vertuous people. Some remains of Aristocracy maintained their ground,

ground, in this metropolis of the world; and to these remains Paganism was constantly attached; all which fully confirms what hath been before advanced, relative to the union of this religion, with the Roman aristocracy. The *Symmachi* and the *Pretextati* revived the memory of *Cato*, and of *Cincinnatus*. As to the people, if they retained the least traces of their ancient liberty, they were visible in the indifference with which they frequently treated the most formidable emperors. The disgust, which the furious *Dioclesian* conceived at their behaviour, is well known. When *Constantius*, all covered with the blood of his subjects, made his triumphal entry into *Rome*, low tauntings, and ridiculous jests were, according to the ancient custom, levelled at him, with impunity. This splendid city was yet filled with riches, when the Barbarians pillaged it, for the first time. Several authors assert, that many citizens were in possession of a revenue of above four millions; and that such as were worth no more than a million, or a million and an half, were placed only in the second class of citizens. These indolent and opulent men imagined that the enjoyment of pleasure was the sole end of

their creation; and were contented to remain as idle spectators of the events of war, as they were of the events of the Circus; with this difference only, that in these last events, they seemed to feel themselves more interested. Even the emperors had, during a long time, accustomed them to this luxurious effeminacy. *I go* (said *Aurelius* to them, in one of his edicts) *to fight the enemy: and I will take care that the Romans shall not suffer the slightest uneasiness. Attend to your games. Frequent your Circus. It is our part to conduct the public business. But you should be entirely devoted to pleasure.* (q) It is easy to conceive that in the midst of so much luxury, and effeminacy, the public morals were daily degenerating. *Petronius* and *Lucian* have made us sufficiently acquainted with the parade and extravagance, peculiar to the entertainments, which were given in their times: but as *Amnianus Marcellinus* hath taken the pains to describe the manners of the Romans, during a less distant period, namely, the age in which he lived, the reader will, probably, be pleased

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(q) Ego efficiam ne sit aliqua sollicitudo Romana. Vacate ludis, vacate Circensibus; nos publicæ necessitates teneant, vos occupent voluptates. (Vopiscus.)

pleased if we present him with the whole passage, as related in the sixth chapter of the fourteenth book.

*Were you, on your arrival at Rome, to be introduced, as a reputable foreigner, to an opulent, or in other words, a very ostentatious man, your first reception would be accompanied with every mark of politeness; after having been overpowered by questions, to which it will be the most frequently necessary to answer, by relating some extravagant stories, you will become astonished to find, that a person of such distinction, should treat a simple individual with so respectful an attention: nay, you will even be ready to condemn yourself for not having visited so charming a city, ten years sooner. But if, encouraged by this obliging welcome, you should return on the morrow, to pay your compliments, a stranger, dropped from the clouds, could not be more stared at. Who is he? and, whence comes he? would be circulated in ill-bred whispers round the room. - At length, however, you will attain to the honour of being known, and admitted on a familiar footing; but yet, if, after three years of assiduous attendance, you were to absent yourself, for the same space of*

*time, you would not, on your return, be either asked how you had been employed, or even told that the loss of your company was perceived. This absurdity is carried still farther, for, previous to the giving of those entertainments, which are so long, and so detrimental to health, it is a matter of tedious deliberation, whether, exclusive of such guests, as are entitled to invitations, any strangers shall also be asked: and if, after a full hearing, and on mature reflection, this point be carried in the affirmative, then the great adepts in all the laws of public games, who never fail to mount guard at the houses of the charioteers belonging to the Circus, or persons the most instructed in the science, and the tricks of play, are the only strangers destined to be admitted. As to the men of learning, and virtue, they are shunned, as the tiresome and useless disturbers of festive mirth: nor doth it once employ their thoughts that the Nomenclatores, accustomed to sell the favours of their masters, take care to invite to the feast, and the distributions, only the most obscure and inferiour individuals, from whom they can extort more money, than from the others. I shall pass slightly over that sumptuous profusion, in their entertainments, and particularly those voluptuous refinements*

ments lately introduced, to take notice of the ridiculous cavalcades, attending on our ostentatious, rich men, who amusing themselves with running post, up and down the streets, at the risk of breaking their necks, on the pavement, are followed by such a numerous train of domestics, that, to borrow the expression of a comic writer, they do not even leave the fool behind, to keep house: however absurd this diversion be, the very matrons are not ashamed to follow it, but hurry through every quarter of the town, in open litters. In these pompous processions, nothing is neglected, and as the expert general, who marshals his army, in a proper order of battle, places his heavy infantry in the front line, his light infantry in the second line, and his bowmen in the rear, so the master of the ceremonies, bearing a wand in his hand, singles out all those who are to have the honour of walking before the triumphal car, and constantly obliges the black troop of cooks, scullions, &c. to fall back into the hinder ranks. These, again, are followed by the remaining number of footmen, and by the Commensales: the procession is then closed by the eunuchs, a deformed multitude, who teach us to execrate the memory of Semiramis, that barbarous queen, who, first violating the  
*laws*

laws of nature, filled this tender, but imprudent mother, with regret, for having too early shewn, in the generations which were scarce begun, the hope of future generations. In such a state of manners, it will easily be supposed, that the few houses, in which the sciences were formerly cultivated, are now only the receptacles of vain and frivolous pleasures: so that in the place of orators, and philosophers, nothing is heard from morning till night, except the sound of flutes, and the airs of the musicians. As to the libraries, they are more shut up and more abandoned than the sepulchres: dances, accompanied by wind instruments are substituted in their room: nay, to so shameful a length have these indignities been carried, that when the famine had rendered it necessary, to send all foreigners out of the city, the law was rigorously put in execution against every one of those useful men, who were the instructors in liberal arts; whilst mimics, stage players, and even three thousand female dancers, with their whole band of musicians and singers, were suffered to remain within the capital. Wheresoever you turn your eyes, you will, also, perceive the women painted, and ridiculously dressed; these tire you more by their continual dancing, than they fatigue themselves;

*selves; and these, had they been married to honest men, might have supplied the state with an useful army of citizens. Rome was once a sure asylum to every individual, who introduced the arts and industry; but now, a foolish and unaccountable vanity esteems every thing vile, and abject, which comes from beyond the Pomærium. I must, however, except the unmarried men, and such as have no heirs. These are loaded with respect and complaisance; although another selfish refinement makes us avoid even the tenderest duties of humanity; for the most terrible diseases, raging within this capital of the world, have occasioned a strict prohibition of the least communication with those unhappy wretches, who are infected with them: and it is now customary, not only to think it sufficient, if some domestics be sent to these persons, to enquire of them any particular news, but to oblige the messenger to go through long ablutions before he can be admitted, to deliver the answer. How delicate these men are! and yet, if you invite them to a feast, or offer them money, they will run for you, even to Spoletum. Such are the manners of the nobility: as to the common people, they generally spend the night in drinking houses, or even in the theatres, under those booths,*



*booths, the invention of which we owe to Catulus, who first introduced at Rome these far-fetched commodities, which might better have become Capua, than the city of Romulus. Multitudes are intoxicated with a passion for gaming. Others expose themselves, during whole days, to the heat, and the rain, to be the umpires amongst the charioteers, and decide on the events of the Circus. Amidst such frivolous engagements, is it possible that the Romans can ever be reasonably employed? &c. &c.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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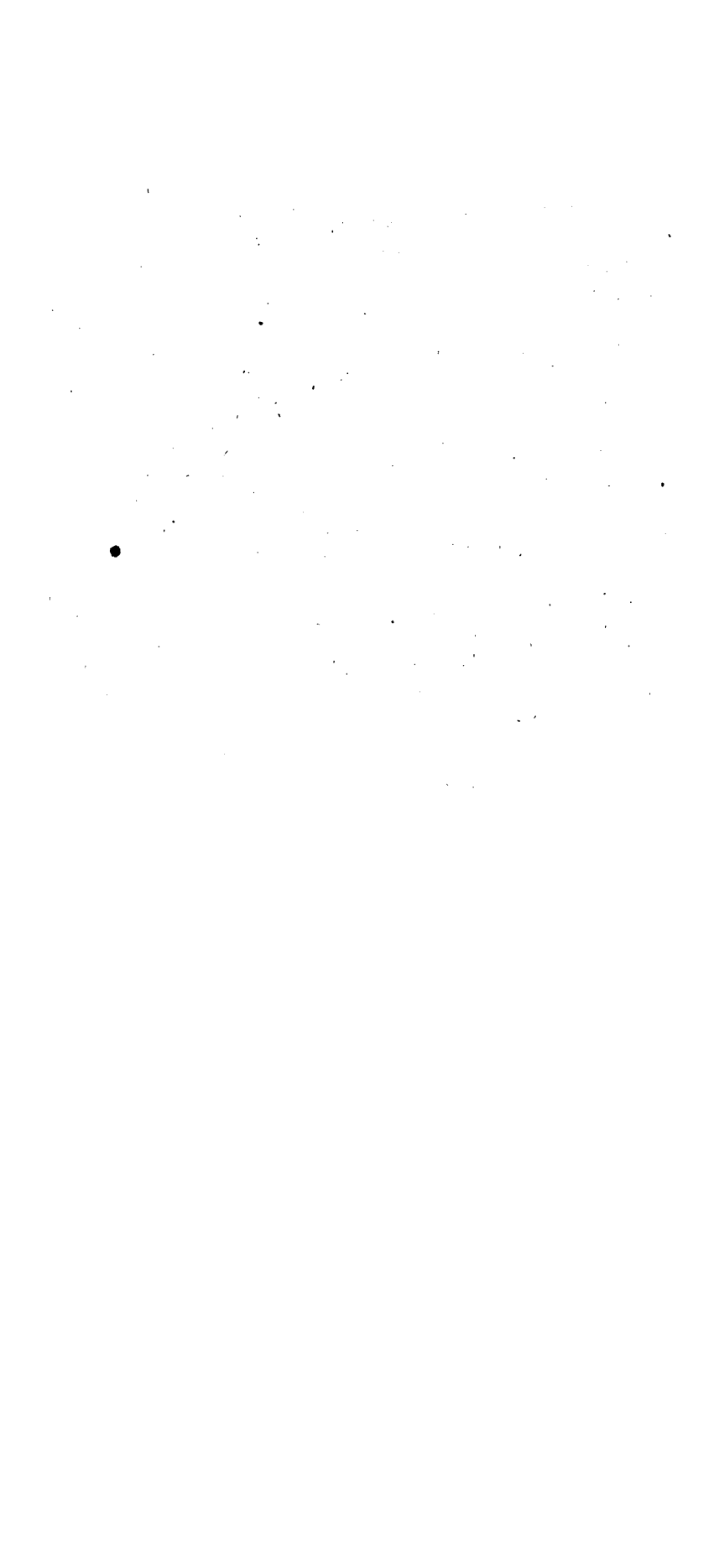
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CORRECTIONS



## CORRECTIONS IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

### INTRODUCTION.

- Page 17. note (c) l. 5. instead of "πολιται" read  
πολις εστι.  
Page 18. l. 12. instead of "prescribed" read proscribed.  
Page 21. l. 6. instead of "on the other," read on the  
other hand.  
Page 22. l. 16. instead of "at another," read at ano-  
ther time.
- 

### SECTION I.

- Page 35. l. 4. instead of "on the other," read on the  
other hand.  
..... note (f) l. 5. instead of "cyropædia," read  
Cyrôpædia.  
..... l. 16. instead of "he goes farther,"  
read he goes farther ;  
..... l. 17. instead of "held" read holden.  
..... l. 38. instead of "logefit" read  
logeoit.  
..... l. 39. instead of "Romish," read  
Roman.  
Page 41. l. 20. instead of "than that" read than that  
speculation.  
Page 42. l. 5. instead of "hath been" read have been.  
Page 53. l. 20. instead of "of state" read of the state.  
Page 58. l. 21. instead of "of another," read of ano-  
ther convenience.  
Page 60. note (m) l. 5. instead of "Halicarnasseus,"  
read Halicarnassius.  
Page 61. l. 2. instead of "mignificence," read magni-  
ficence.  
Page 67. l. 17. erase "of."  
Page 71. l. 27. instead of "Lacedemonions," read La-  
cedemonians.  
Page 93. l. 19. instead of "forbode" read forebode.  
Page 97. l. 17. instead of "where as" read whereas.  
Page 100. note (m) l. 1. instead of "nostributa" read  
nos tributa.  
Page 108. l. 6. instead of "to estimate, we have," read  
to estimate. We have.  
Page 111. l. 11. instead of "policy" read polity.  
Page 119. l. 5. instead of "Froeffart," read Froissart.  
Page 127. l. 5. instead of "agragarian," read agrarian.  
Page 150. note (x) last line, instead of "Romanis,"  
read Romanos.  
Page 151. l. 6. instead of "attached" read attacked.

## CORRECTIONS IN THE FIRST VOLUME.

- Page 152. l. 12. instead of "their" read these.
- Page 158. l. 24. read whilst.
- ..... l. 25. instead of "had," read hath gained.
- Page 161. l. 16. instead of "Sicinum" read Ticinum.
- Page 164. l. 22. instead of "heighth" read height.
- Page 169. l. 22. instead of "refulerint," read retulerint.
- Page 192. l. 8. instead of "corns" read corn.
- ..... l. 13. erase the mark of interrogation.
- Page 193. l. 31. read satisfaction.
- Page 200. l. 21. instead of "rank magistracy," read rank, magistracy.
- Page 210. l. 23. read sixtieth.
- Page 213. l. 4. read dynasties.
- Page 217. l. 1. instead of "preserved" read retained.
- Page 231. l. 6. instead of "Tryption," read Tryphon.
- Page 233. l. 7. instead of "throne," read thrown.
- Page 246. l. 19. read Freinshemius.
- Page 249. l. 3. instead of "we," read were.
- Page 268. l. 6. instead of "those early" read these more recent.
- Page 269. l. 22. instead of "as less than it was," read as greater than it also was.
- Page 292. l. 16. instead of "dogmas," read dogmata.
- Page 293. l. 10. instead of "imposters," read impostors.
- ..... l. 23. instead of "dogmas" read dogmata.
- Page 300. l. 3. instead of "dogmas" read dogmata.
- Page 314. l. 13. read Silenus.
- Page 315. l. 27. read necessity.
- Page 318. l. 16. read dogmata.
- Page 329. l. 28. instead of "last note" read the note *x*.
- Page 331. l. 13. read *επληρομεν*.
- Page 341. l. 21. instead of "he," read she.
- Page 344. l. 6. instead of "was" read became.
- Page 345. l. 7. instead of "prescription," read prescription.
- Page 401. l. 10. instead of "apud Hierosblymam," read apud Hierosolymam.
- ..... l. 11. instead of "inter neciva" read inter-neciva.
- ..... l. 19. instead of "in excessum" read inaccessum.
- ..... l. 21. instead of "incertum" read inceptum.
- Page 414. l. 14. read sources.
- Corrections for the APPENDIX.*
- Page 7. l. 26. instead of "puculiar," read peculiar.
- Page 20. l. 15. instead of "parte," read parle.

SECTION I.

*Considerations on the lot of Human Nature,  
in the earliest ages of antiquity.*



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